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CU

AMIGA

MAGAZINE

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SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS: Subscriptions are available from Tower Publishing, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Lathkill Street, Market Harborough LE16 9EF Tel: 01858 435 350 . Annual subscription rates (inc postage) 12 issues: UK/BFPO £54. SURFACE MAIL ROW & EUROPE: £60.00. AIRMAIL EUROPE £70.00. ROW AIRMAIL £90. See subs page for special offers.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM BY ST IVES PETERBOROUGH/ROCHE
COVER DISK AND CD-ROM DUPLICATION BY DISKXPRESS
ABC: 47,670 July– Dec 1995.

CU AMIGA MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 1996 • CONTENTS

Editorial



If you want to know about speed then this is the issue for you. The Amiga has been criticised for being too slow in the past, but the accelerators on show here take it into a different league. They are expensive, yes, but you can't expect to achieve performance without cost. It's an equation which doesn't add up.

On the feature front we take a look at the situation in North America, the home of VIScorp, and thus the new home of the Amiga. The Amiga show in Canada is covered along with VIScorp's activities and the general state of hardware and software development on that continent. We also look at the next generation of Amiga Comms software, represented by the reviews of Miami and Termite on pages 50 and 51. These packages are the most advanced of their kind, not just on Amiga, but on any other platform and, combined with the best equipment available for Amiga, they can leave other computers standing.

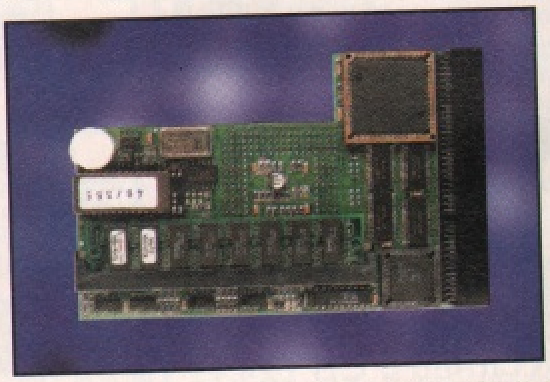
Many thanks to all of you who sent back the letter to VIScorp printed in the August issue. Unfortunately, due to problems with the Amiga buyout (see news), we have been unable to communicate all your opinions to them yet, but fear not, this has actually been advantageous: there are now more replies in the post bag than we ever imagined receiving. By holding on a little bit longer we have an even more impressive horde of responses with which to make VIScorp sit up and take notice.

Finally, as of November we go monthly with our CU Amiga Magazine Super CDs. As usual they will be packed with the best software, pics and sounds available on Amiga, so if you're a CD user, watch out!

Alan Dykes, Editor



News 14



Cover Story and Features

20 Amiga Stateside story

Our recent Euroscene feature covered how the Amiga is doing in Europe. Now it's time to look further afield and check out the current state of play of the Amiga across the pond.

24 To infinity and beyond

The Net is here to stay. The Amiga has been linked to the Net longer than any other machine so it should be up to us to lead the way forward. We examine the next generation of Net software for the Amiga.



53 Accelerators

Now everyone can harness the awesome power of the 68060 processor, thanks to the new Cyberstorm II 060 and the Apollo 1260 cards. For those with slightly less spending power there's also the highly desirable 68040-equipped Apollo 1240. Turn to page 53 for all the details.

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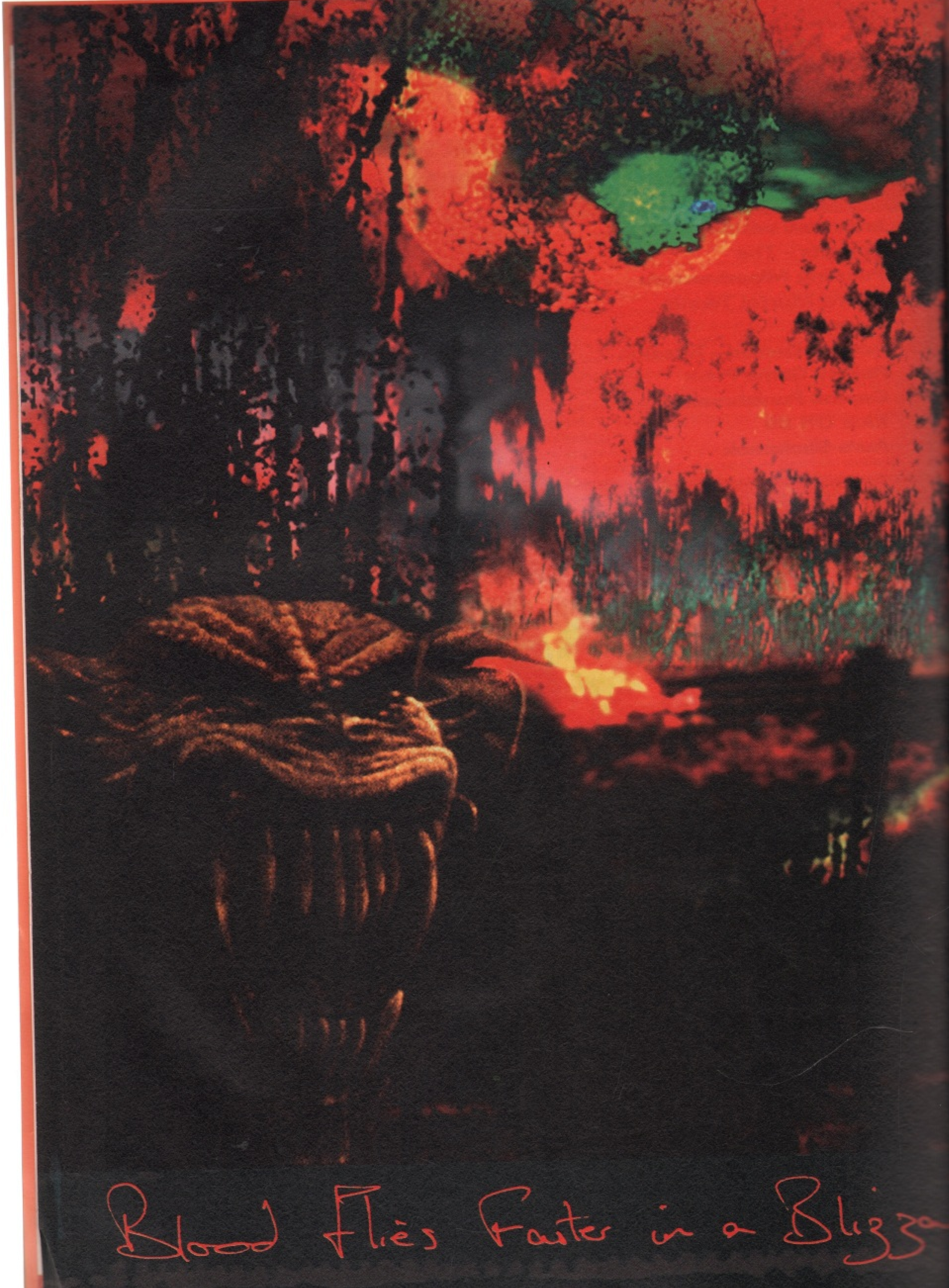
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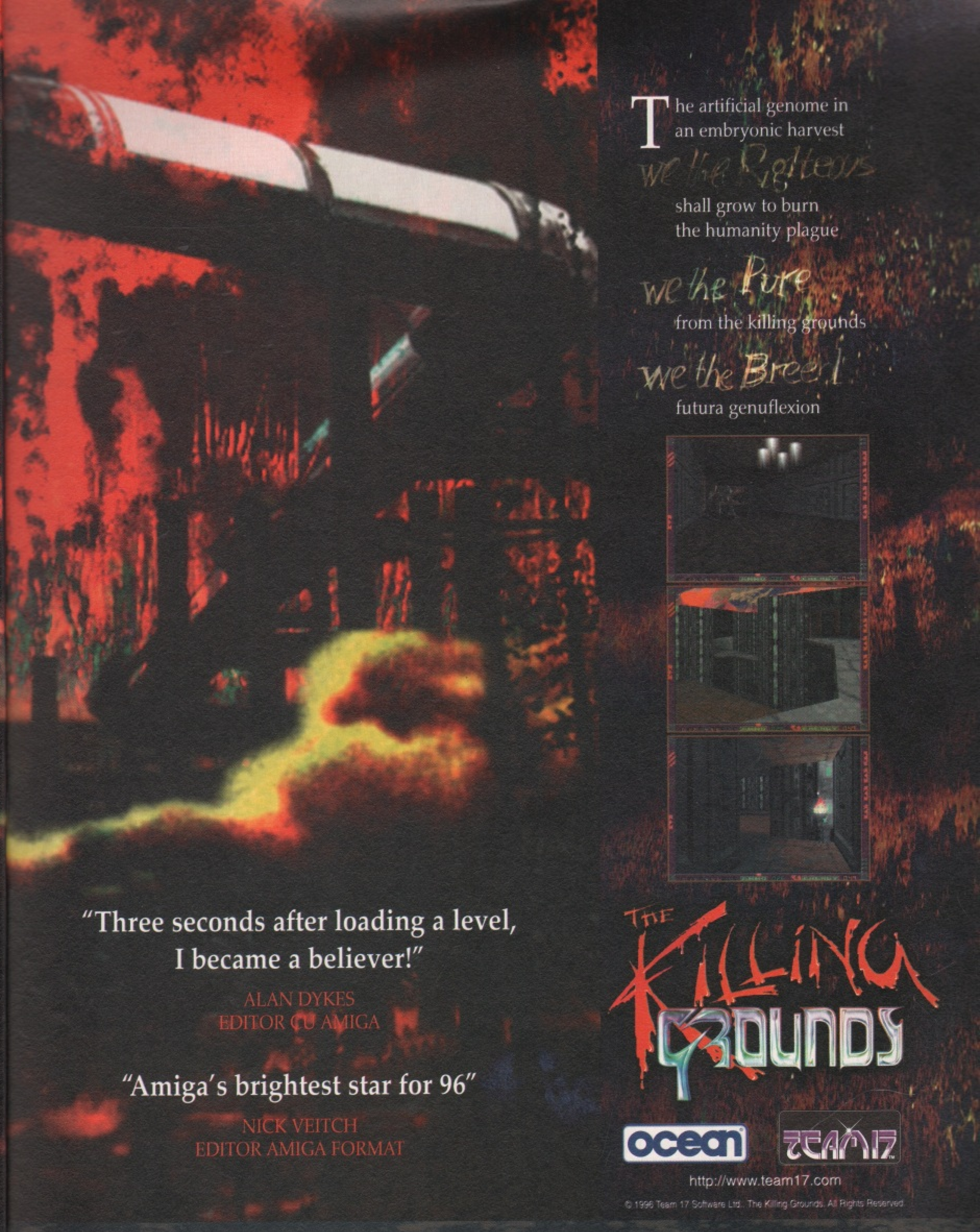
Cover Disks



8 Upper Disk Tools
Cover disk 142 is something you should always have handy in case of emergencies as it will help you recover those vital files in the case of a total hard drive breakdown. Upper Disk Tools is really two programs: Recovery and DSBackup and they're both yours on this excellent cover disk.

12 Mikro Mortal Tennis
This little belter of a tennis game on cover disk 143 rocked into the office last week and completely won us over game set and match. We were so impressed by it we decided to put it on our cover disk. Try out a few matches for yourself, you can play either arcade mode or player vs player mode in this demo.

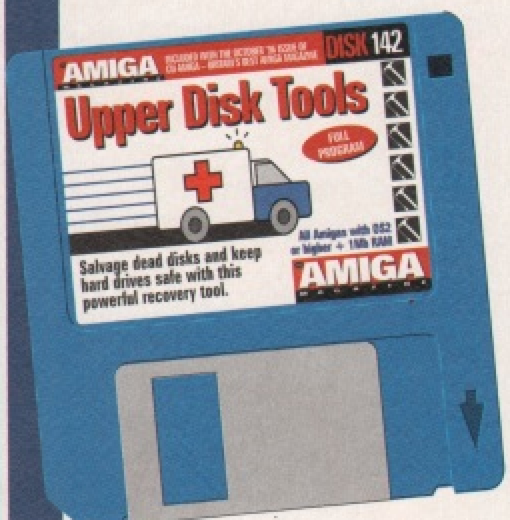

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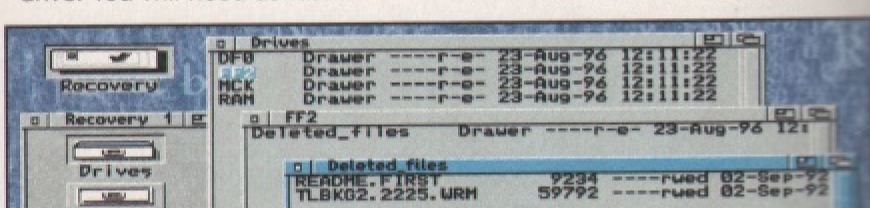
DISK 142
Upper Disk Tools

Sleep easier at nights, safe in the knowledge that if all is lost on your Amiga you could get it all back in one piece thanks to Upper Disk Tools.

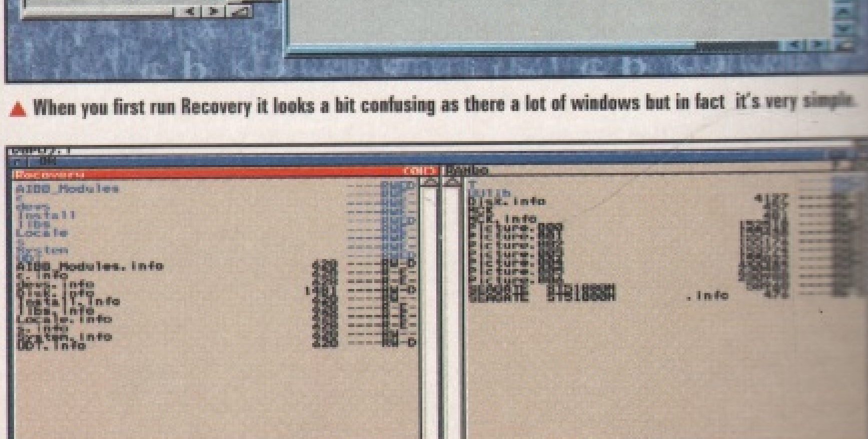


Upper Disk Tools consists of two programs. A disk recovery program (unsuprisingly) called Recovery and a disk structure backup program called DSBackup. They can both be run straight from this month's cover disk or they can be installed onto floppy or hard drive. You will need as least Amiga OS 2.0 to use either package. Also please note that Upper Disk Tools doesn't work with Fourth Level Development's AFS filesystem.

The Recovery program is unlike conventional disk salvaging tools such as AmiBack Tools and DiskSalv. Whereas these two packages work from a single GUI, when you run Recovery you get a GUI with several complex-looking gadgets. However, it's simpler than it looks, as Recovery creates a handy AmigaDOS device called REC: when run. This device labelled Recovery has a hard drive icon and it can be used via the Workbench . REC: can also be used with any Amiga program capable of accessing devices such as the AmigaDOS Shell or a directory utility like Directory Opus. Whether using Workbench or anything else, when a directory is obtained of the REC: device, two drawers



▲ When you first run Recovery it looks a bit confusing as there a lot of windows but in fact it's very simple.



▲ You can use Recovery's REC device with Directory Opus and other similar programs.

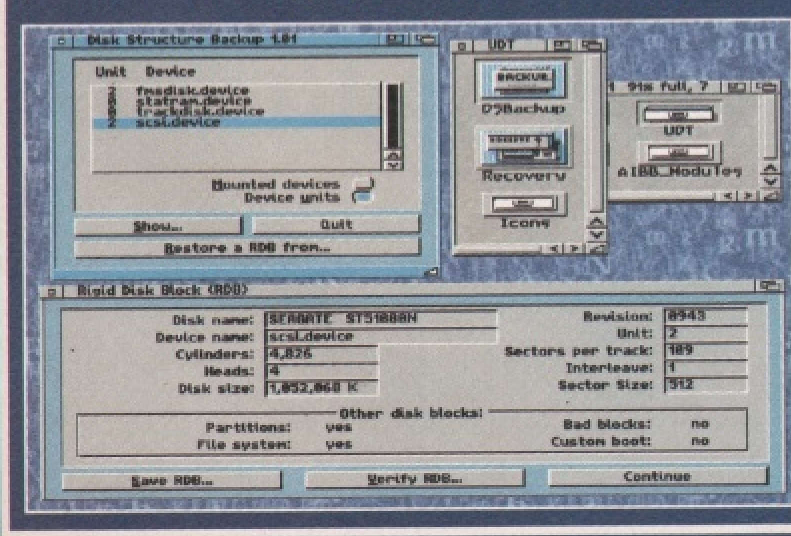
DSbackup

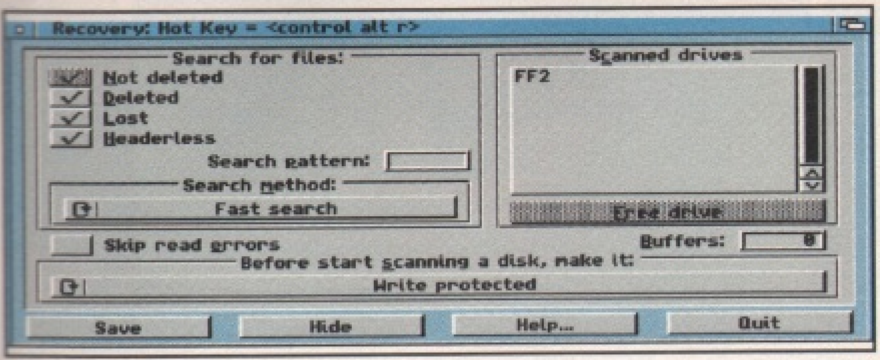
DSBackup is a simple tool which enables Recovery to help out in the event of a serious hard drive error. DSbackup backs up the details of your partitions in two ways. It will create a mountfile or Rigid Disk Block (RDB) file based on an existing partition (or any AmigaDOS volume). So, in the event of a serious corruption of the hard drive, the partitions can be remounted either by re-writing the RDB file to the hard drive or by mounting from an AmigaDOS mountlist.

To create a backup, run DSBackup and click on one of your hard drive partitions which should appear in the Devices list. You may also choose device units if necessary. Once done, press Show and the precise details of this partition are displayed. From here a mountlist can be saved out. In the event of a loss of this device, it should be possible to restore the drive to the system by using MOUNT <filename> where the filename is the name you saved out the mountfile as. To back up Rigid Disk Blocks, the Device Units option must be used. Click on the hard drive in question and again press Show. The results are much the same but this time you can save out the RDB of the drive somewhere safe. It's important to know that an RDB holds the partition details for ALL of the partitions present on that drive. In this way one RDB file performs the same as many mount lists.

If the RDB for that hard drive is ever lost, the 'Restore a RDB from ...' option can be chosen after highlighting the hard drive to write the mountfile too. Note that after a serious hard drive corruption, the devices when restored may show up as NDOS or the like (after restoring an RDB, a reboot will be needed). Ignore this, Recovery should still be able to salvage the files onto a healthy drive.

Back up your hard drive RDBs and keep your CU Amiga Upper Disk Tools cover disk in a safe place. Don't forget to also keep your hard drive RDBs and mountlists on floppy disk, otherwise if your hard drive is damaged, you won't be able to Recover it! The complete manual for Upper Disk Tools will be on CUCD4.





▲ The Recovery GUI can be quickly accessed by using the hot key control-alt-r.

will appear called Drives and Scanned_drives. The Drives drawer will contain sub directories for each and every OFS/FFS formatted track based device on your Amiga. When one of those directories is entered, Recovery will scan the drive concerned. Whether it performs a fast search only for Deleted, Lost and Headerless files, or whether it shows every file on the drive depends on the setting of Search Method on the Recovery GUI. The Fast setting is fast but won't show all files while Deep shows every file but needs to read the whole disk. A word of warning, once a directory has been obtained of a drive, that drive will be unavailable for the rest of the Amiga system. The scanned driver will either be write protected or dismounted, again there's a cycle gadget for this on the Recovery GUI called 'Before start scanning a disk make it:'. In order to free the drive up again so that the system can use it, the scanned drives appear on the Recovery GUI. All that's needed to free the drive is to click on its entry and press Free Drive. It will then be available for the rest of your Amiga programs.

A quick scan

By using Recovery in this way, any drive from simple floppy disks to the largest hard drives can have deleted files quickly copied off them. However if more serious errors on these drives occur, the REC: device will not complain about any read/write/checksum errors. It will contain the files whether they are whole or damaged so everything from a selective recovery to a massive disk salve operation by copying the entire drive elsewhere can be performed. In the latter case, the offending HD can then be formatted and the contents copied back without use of the REC: device. At any time the Recovery GUI can be hidden by pressing the Hide button. The hot-key combination control-alt-r will make it reappear when needed.

Take note

There's a few tips to take note of with Recovery. If the drive in question has read errors, you'd be well advised to click on the Skip read Errors checkbox on the Recovery GUI. You could also fill in a pattern such as #?.gif in the Search pattern box so that the REC: device only showed .gif files. Lastly, if memory is running low, there's an option which may be activated from the options menu to activate Recovery's Low memory setup which will slow things down but at least still work.

Due to a bug in amigaguide.library V34.11 that prevents it from working correctly with AmigaDOS 2.04, 2.05 and 2.1 the on line help facility has been removed for those who run under that version of the operating system. This bug was discovered after the Upper Disk Tools documentation had been printed. We greatly regret the need to remove functionality from our software, but felt it necessary to prevent software failure during use. This alteration does not affect users with AmigaDOS 3.0 or higher as long as amigaguide.library V39 (supplied with AmigaDOS 3.0 and above) is available to the system. Online help is still available to users whose Amigas are running less than Amiga DOS 3.0. It will be in the form of help windows rather than Amigaguide. We want to apologise for any inconvenience to all the users affected by this last minute change. A new fixed version of amigaguide.library will be freely available to every registered user of Upper Disk Tools via the public domain network in the form of programs (patches) that update the installed software. Also note that bug fixes and minor enhancements will be made available via the same route (public domain)
Manuel Lemos,
Upper Design

Dear User
Thank you for purchasing Upper Disk Tools. We hope it meets your expectation. We would like to continue developing it further, to make it better fulfil your needs. We hope you would like to help us in that task by providing us with feedback. This can be achieved by replying to the following questionnaire. Remember that bug fixes and minor improvements will be distributed freely in the public domain. When finished, please return the questionnaire to: Upper Design, Aparto 391, 3800 AVEIRO, Portugal.
Email Address (preferred contact method): Internet: Upper Design@zeus.ci.ua.pt
FidoNet: 2:361/1.8 BIX: mlemos (@bix.com)

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17 Are there any other types of disk related programs you would like on the disk?
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Manuel Lemos,
Upper Design

DISTANT SUNS 5.01
DESKTOP PLANETARIUM
CD ROM

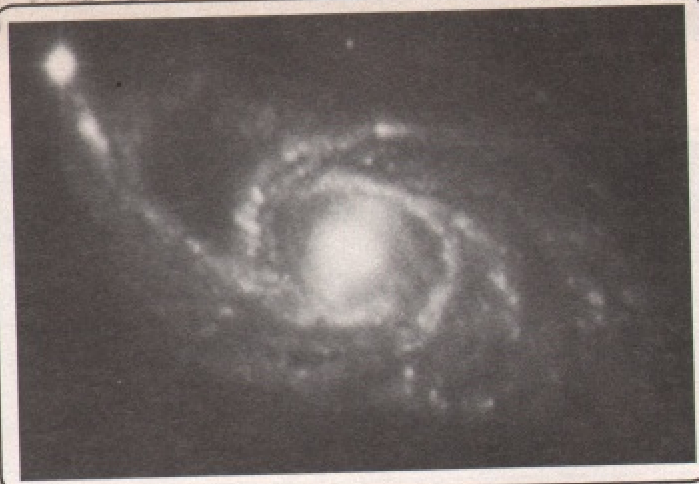
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- 1500 IFF images in 16 colors and 256 colors
- Megabytes of 16 color and 26 color anims
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- 3-D planet rendering
- View images in 256 colors on AGA compatible Amigas
- Display night sky from 4713 BC to 10,000 AD
- Add your own comet and Asteroid data
- Comet Hyakutake and Hale-Bopp data included

AmigaDOS 2.04 or newer, 2 megs Ram & hard disk required. NTSC and PAL versions available.

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Upgrade from Distant Suns 5.0 floppy - £22.99
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- Comes with 25 full screen images
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VistaPro 3.05

- **IFF 24 bit images up to 4096x4096 pixels**
- **Can handle 8 times the data resolution of VistaLite**
- **3-D Stereo Image rendering**
- **Place trees and buildings where you want them**
- **Use foreground and back ground images**
- **Expanded script language for animation rendering**
- **AREXX support for remote rendering**
- **Use Contiguous Landscapes for larger regions**

Requires AmigaDOS 2.04 or newer
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- Design your own VistaPro Landscapes
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- Smooth and roughen landscapes
- Cut and paste landscape features
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- Draw animation paths on topo Maps
- Automatically generates Vistapro/VistaLite Scripts
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- Add loops and spin paths to animations

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Create animations where the landscape, trees, clouds, and colors change before your eyes. Morph Landscapes! Grow trees! Change Seasons! Create moving clouds! Multiple morphs in a single Script!

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from VistaLite 3.0

Special for CU Amiga readers

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Vista Lite 3.00 Manual

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cover disks Loading instructions

Upper Disk Tools

Disk number 142

Upper Disk Tools is a handy program to have around as it could prove to be a life saver in the disastrous event of a complete hard drive crash. Although it hurts to even think about it, this little program could help you retrieve all those vital files (see page eight for more details on exactly how it performs this miracle).

Upper Disk Tools (UDT) is really two programs: Recovery and DSBackup. You will need at least Kickstart version 2.0 to run either and Kickstart 2.1 to use the non-English language versions of the catalogues.

You can run UDT from the cover disk or choose to install it to your hard drive. To boot from the cover disk insert the disk and reset your Amiga, it will load up a very simple Workbench. From here, enter the UDT directory and simply click on DSBackup or Recovery. The same operation can be performed by booting from your own Workbench either on floppy disk or hard drive.

Installing UDT to hard drive is also extremely simple. Simply enter the Install directory and click on the Installer for whichever language you prefer (UDT will default to English). Recovery and DSBackup can also dragged onto any disk or hard drive partition you like.

Remember that you'll need a copy of UDT on floppy disk in case something goes seriously wrong with a hard drive so it might be a good idea to make a backup copy of the cover disk first.

IF YOUR DISK/CD WON'T LOAD

We go to great trouble to ensure that the CU Amiga Magazine cover disks will work on common Amiga models. However, if you do experience problems follow this simple guide.

1: Remove all unnecessary upgrades and peripherals, such as printers and modems. Some trapdoor expansions can also cause problems.

2: Follow the instructions on this and previous pages exactly.

3: Contact our 3.5 inch disk people: DISKXPRESS, 7 WILLOW COURT, BOURTON INDUSTRIAL PARK, BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL54 2HQ. TEL: 01451 810788.

. Tel: 01451 810788. Email:100714.334@compuserve.com

If they advise that the disk is faulty, fill in your details in the form below, and send this form, along with the faulty cover disk and a 25p stamped self addressed envelope to:

CU Amiga Magazine Disk Returns, DISKXPRESS, 7 WILLOW COURT, BOURTON INDUSTRIAL PARK, BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL54 2HQ. TEL: 01451 810788.

We also vigorously virus check our cover disks on a branded virus checker. If some escape our attention we cannot assume responsibility for it.

NAME: ....

ADDRESS: ....

....

TYPE OF AMIGA OWNED: ....

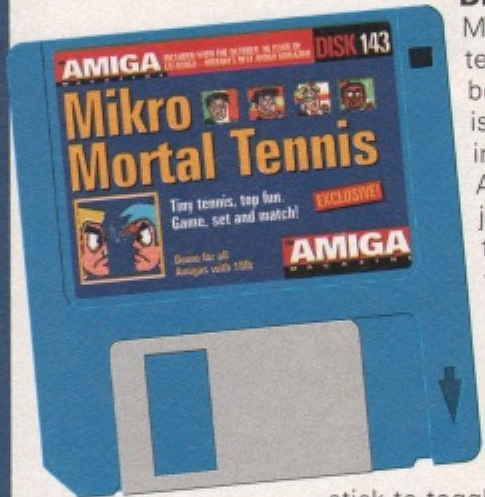
DISK NUMBER: ....

DESCRIBE EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO LOAD THE DISK:

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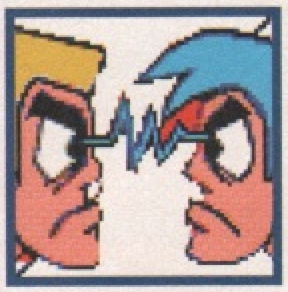
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Mikro Mortal Tennis

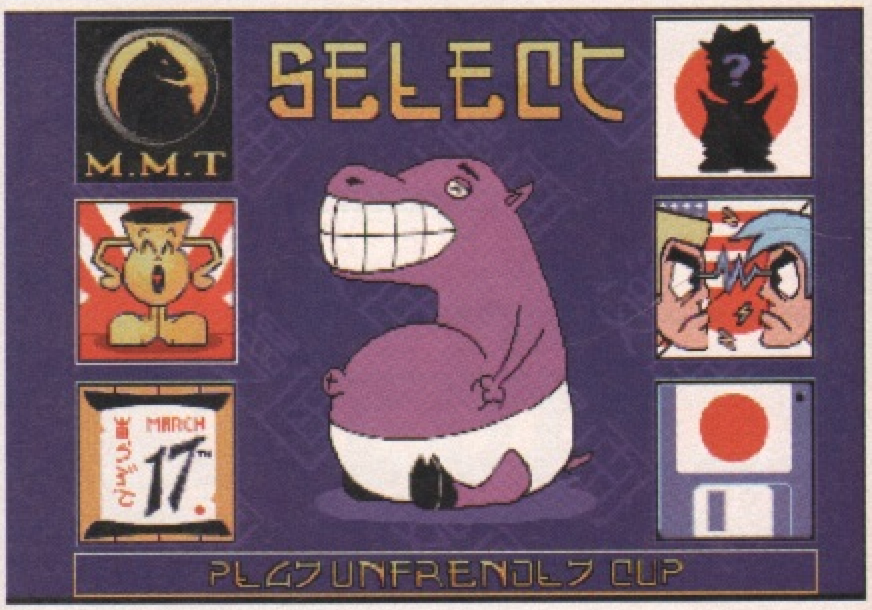


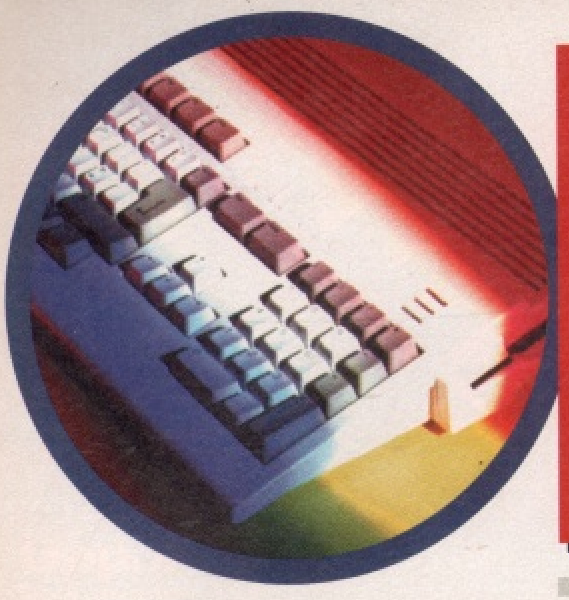
Disk number 143: Not only is Mikro Mortal Tennis a funky little tennis game, it's also a self booting disk. All you have to do is insert cover disk 143 into your internal drive and restart your Amiga. But first of all plug your joystick in. You need it to play the game. Once you've started your Amiga it will take about a minute to load the demo. Once loaded you will be presented with an options screen that allows you to choose either arcade mode or a player Vs player mode. Use your joystick to toggle which option you want.

After choosing, you will enter a playing screen as one of the two players. To serve, press the fire button and move the joystick to place the short-lived red target roughly on the spot you want to serve to. To return the ball first position yourself, then press the fire button to wind up for the shot. Then release the fire button with your joystick pressed firmly in the direction you want to return to. Try different serves and moving towards and back from the net. The main features disabled in this demo are the league and championship options, but you should still have fun in both modes available. Don't forget your Robinson's barley water now!









News

Saving Amiga Takes Longer Than Expected

The legal difficulties pointed out by Bill Buck regarding the Amiga takeover have meant that no new announcements have been made by the Chicago company about their Amiga plans. Despite tacit confirmation that a cheaper A4000T would be top of their list of priorities, according to a rare interview carried out by Thomas Svenson of Amiga Info magazine in Sweden, the whole VIScorp management team have remained remarkably tight lipped.

As Mr Buck indicated in his press release last month there are still many loose ends regarding ownership of all the copyright, parts etc which currently exist because these problems were unsatisfactorily sorted out by Escom when they took over Amiga. This could be a big headache for VIScorp who intend to use the Amiga as the basis for their ED set-top box. If Amiga copyright is even partially owned by another company, or if there is a grey area surrounding the ownership it would make production more difficult with a licence possibly payable to a third party. This is obviously not what VIScorp intended when they announced that they were purchasing the Amiga lock stock and barrel several months ago. So the process has still not finished at time of writing, despite several announcements that it had.

We have now received over 2,000 responses to the save the Amiga campaign. They have come from all over the world as well as the UK and many people have added their own comments to the list we made on the letter.



Chief among people's comments are their loyalty to the Amiga, having upgraded and supported the computer through thick and thin and all want to continue using the Amiga in an advanced form past the year 2000. We have now gathered all the responses for the month and will be presenting them in a post sack to VIScorp.

We'll have their first comments next month. By then we can only hope that the legal situation has been sorted out and they can give us some positive, concrete answers.

The Little People

As well as Enigma, OTM are currently working on another new title. This new game may be called gnomes in tribute to the stars of the game: those loveable garden ornaments. So far it is billed as puzzle game which as well as all the usual bolts and nuts will feature an extra special installer which will recognise which machine (Gnomes will run on all Amigas with 1Mb as well as PCs) you have and install the relevant graphics, sound FX and music. Superb.

ICPUG Trial Offer

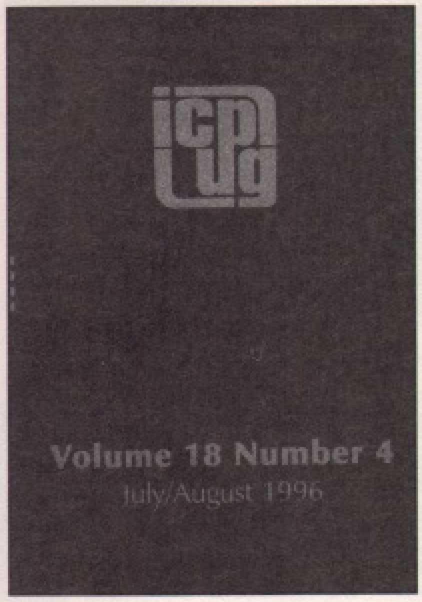
For those not familiar with ICPUG, the former Independent Computer Products Users Group, it is a network of Amiga (and Commodore 64) fanatics who swop information, advice and software for their favourite computer. The group is an invaluable source of information on all aspects of Amiga and if you are a serious user and you want to contact like minded people you might find it useful to get in touch. At the moment they are offering a trial membership from this September through to the the end of the year for £10.00 in the UK.

The non-profit-making organisation which was formed in 1978 with the aim of supporting most home computers, but especially Amiga, as well as PC and other machines made by the former Commodore company.

The trial membership includes two issues of the ICPUG Journal, use of the ICPUG free PD software library for the Amiga, and all other Commodore computers, plus a free PD library (DOS and Windows) for the PC. Discounts and technical help hot-lines are available for members.

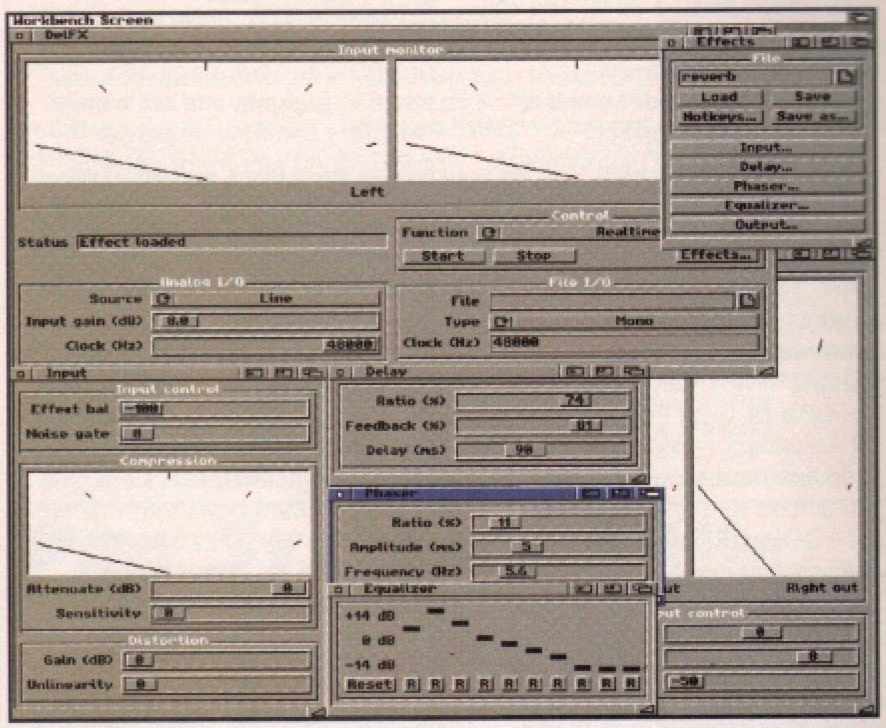
Through the Readers Write section of the ICPUG Journal members can contact other users of home computers both in the UK and overseas. With the demise of Commodore and the acquisition of Amiga Technologies by VIScorp, the 'For Sale and Wanted' column is often the only means of acquiring items which are now out of production.

To get more details call the Membership Secretary, Tim Arnot, 17 Colne Drive, Oakfields, Didcot, Oxon OX11 7RZ or Email him on: digits@cix.compulink.co.uk



Delfina DSP Imminent

A new sound card offering realtime digital audio effects in 16-bit stereo is almost ready for release. The Zorro card known as Delfina, from Finnish developers Petsoff, has had its full release delayed slightly while the final touches are made to the software. We expect to be able to bring you a full review in the next issue of CU Amiga Magazine. When used as a realtime sound processor the card offers noise gate, compression, distortion, delay, phaser and equaliser effects, all of which are fully configurable from the software interface.



▲ Delfina is the most exciting audio add-on the Amiga has ever seen, with studio-quality effects processing.

Blittersoft Announces New Deals

Blittersoft now join Harwoods as suppliers for the full range of Amiga products from German peripherals developer Phase 5 here in the UK.

They will be supplying the Cyberstorm, Blizzard and Cybergraphics cards as well as their various peripherals such as SCSI chips etc.

Blitttersoft will also be carrying the new Picasso IV graphics card released in competition with the Cybervision from Phase 5 we announced last month.

This new board will be fully Zorro II/III auto sensing and will have the following features as standard:

- 64-bit Cirrus Logic 5446 Chip
- Max Pixel clock 135 MHz
- Max non-interlaced res: 1280 x 1024 (8-bit) and 1024 x 763 (24-bit),
- Mac 4Mb EDO RAM (2Mb standard).
- Flicker fixer on-board
- Zorro II/III autosensing
- 'Video on Workbench' – a scalable LIVE video window on Workbench!
- Audio capability such as switching between different sound sources, original Amiga sound, graphic board itself (sound chip future upgrade), CD-ROM audio and video source.
- Compatible with genlock
- Ports for additional modules : such as MPEG, TV-Tuner, Sound, and 3D-Chip.

The new Picasso IV graphics card from Blittersoft is due for release towards the end of November and should be priced around £399.95 for the 2Mb board. We will hopefully have a head to head between it and the CyberVision 64/3D in the next month or two. So watch this space very carefully.

phase 5
DIGITAL PRODUCTS

Amiga Top 10

Supplied by HMV

No.	Title	Publisher
1	Worms	Ocean
2	Kick Off 96	Anco
3	The Killing Grounds	Ocean
4	Sensible Golf	Virgin
5	Super Tennis Champs	Audiogenic
6	Sensible World of Soccer Euro'96	Warner
7	Premier Manager 3 Deluxe	Gremlin
8	Ultimate Soccer Manager Data	Sierra
9	Super Skidmarks	Guildhall
10	Brian Lara Cricket '96	Audiogenic

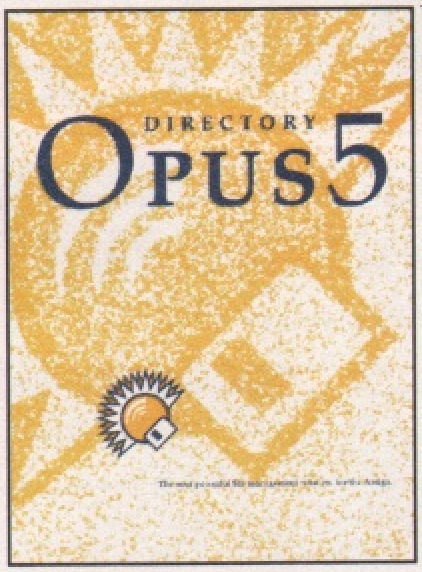
Opus 5.5 Now Ready

One of the Amiga's most essential utilities, Directory Opus 5.0, has just been upgraded to version 5.5. The original award winning 4.0 was cover mounted on CU Amiga Magazine in February 1995 and was superseded on the shelves by version 5.0, which scored 95%. The utility which can almost replace Workbench allows vastly improved file handling and a more modern interface.

However some users (including members of this mag's staff) suggested improvements to the 5.0 release many of which have been acted upon for this version. They claim that it is "more of a new version than just a simple update". New features quoted by GP's Dr Greg Perry include:

- An enhanced WorkBench Replacement Mode has been enhanced that allows you to use DOPus 5.5 as a complete WB replacement.
- An integrated OpusFTP capability that lets you access remote Internet sites directly by using standard Opus Listers.
- Sleeker, tidier button banks and requesters.
- New Filetype-specific pop-up menus allow special menus for icons and files. Use Filetypes to add custom menus for different types of files and icons.
- New independent HotKeys are now supported.
- New Scripts system allows functions to be executed upon most system events.
- Custom menus have been improved with multiple user menus with sub items.
- New Automatic Filetype Creator allows you to create and test Filetypes with ease.
- A font viewer is now included.
- New colour remapping of button and icon images with support for 'Magic Workbench' and similar systems.
- Cybergraphics RTG are now supported.
- Enhanced clipboard support providing full cut, copy and paste in gadgets and file Listers.
- Listers can now display a background picture or pattern.
- Several new internal commands and many new ARexx commands have been added or extended with new features. You can now even add you own internal commands with ARexx.

Available in September from Wizard Developments at £59.99, there will also be an upgrade offer for registered users of Opus 5.0. If you want more information call Wizard on 01322 527 800 or check out GP's Web Site at: **http://www.livewire.com.au/gpsoft/**



Vulcan's Lined Up

Vulcan Software, those bastions of Amiga games are now on-line. Their new web site will include details and downloadable demos of all their latest releases such as Bograts (see preview in this issue), the latest in the Tiny Troops series and Jetpilot. Up to date information on other games in the pipeline will also be there as well as information on current titles and registering facilities. You can access their site on www.vulcan.co.uk.



▲ **See early screenshots of Bograts on their site.**

Blitz Book

Neather Realm Software makers of International Flow Charter are getting ready to release the Blitz Basic Book. For more information contact the NRS web page or contact Michael Kramer, owner of Neather Realm Software at r3mwk@vm1.cc.uakron.edu or http://www.amigamall.com/nrs
NRS are at 2930 8th Street, Cuyahoga Falls Ohio 44221, United States.
Phone/FAX: (330) 928-1738.

Harwoods Slash Prices

Gordon Harwood Computers have just cut the prices of their Phase 5 products by up to £50 in response to Blittersoft being appointed as new distributors. You can now get a Blizzard 1230IV for just £159.95, exceptional value. See their forthcoming advertisements for a full list of reductions.

CU Special Offer Is A Reality

All you budding game developers out there take note. BPM Promotions are giving CU Amiga readers a free demo of their Reality Game Engine (previewed August '96). Turn to page 34 for more details.

Returning To The Fold

Contrary to popular belief Effigy Software haven't abandoned the Amiga at all. They've come up with a novel way of incorporating their interests in both PCs and Amigas. They will be releasing their games on dual format CDs which will run on Amiga and PC. Lots of goodies are lined up for the not so distant future. We should have more news of releases soon.

Cheap DPaint Add On

DRC Sequential Graphics, an American Amiga developer for the past four years, recently announced that their Motion/Collage package, a third party product for Dpaint IV and V is to be sold off at a bargain basement price. A demo of the product can be downloaded from their web site at: http://www.itsnet.com/~bug/StudioMushi/mc.html

Motion/Collage contains 150 motion clips for Deluxe PaintIV and V's move requester, each with a descriptive name detailing the degree, angle, and style of movement. The motion clips simulate complex DVE motion for logos and graphics. Motion/Collage package includes the following 150 motion clips, a tutorial and 50 lo-res, 2 colour, reference animations and an installation utility.

This collection originally retailed for $69.95. Now they want to sell all remaining stocks for just $5. They are US based though so the likely cost (via post or Email) will undoubtedly be higher. To find out more, send Email to D@itsnet.com or call DRC Sequential Graphics (now called Studio Mushi) at (USA) 00 1 801 373 9579.

Attention All Artists

Keiron Robbins, formerly of InternetFCI, is a keen Amiga enthusiast who has recently taken the leap and formed and World Wide Web page design company called Conspicuous. What's interesting is the fact that Keiron uses Amigas to design the graphics for Internet web sites for corporate clients, often utilising such packages as LightWave and ImageFX. What's more, Conspicuous is implementing a graphics library consisting of both 2D and 3D graphics. If pictures in the library are used in the design of web sites or by other clients, the author will be payed a royalty. Accordingly Conspicuous is putting out the call for Amiga artists, whether 2D or 3D, to submit their material into the library and stand a chance of gaining fame and fortune from their Amiga work. In order to do so, why not drop into Conspicuous' WWW site on http://www.conspicuous.co.uk. You can also E-mail gfxlibrary@conspicuous.co.uk for details on how to send material into the company.



▲ **Conspicuous, a new WWW design company that uses Amigas, is looking for artists' submissions.**

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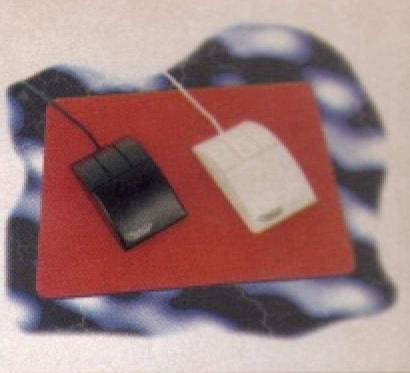
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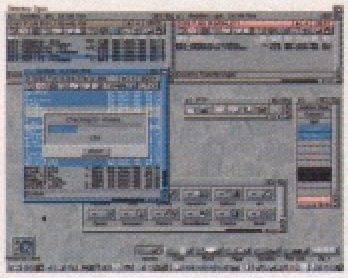
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DIRECTORY OPUS 5

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The BEST just got BETTER! After 12 months of further development Opus 5.5 is now ready and shipping. Stunning new features include:- ◆ Icon Action Mode ◆ Workbench Replacement Mode dramatically enhanced ◆ OpusFTP capability to access Internet FTP sites with a lister ◆ Borderless Button Banks ◆ Filetype-specific pop-up menus ◆ CyberGraphics RTG supported ◆ Independent HotKeys ◆ Script system to execute commands upon events ◆ Multiple custom menus with sub items ◆ Automatic Filetype Creator to create and test Filetypes with ease ◆ A font viewer ◆ Listers fields for titles, re-sorting by fields, plus a 'version' field ◆ Colour re-mapping of button/icon images with support for 'Magic Workbench' etc. ◆ Selectively hide unwanted drive icons ◆ Clipboard support for cut, copy and paste in gadgets & Listers ◆ Resize, Iconify, and scroll busy Listers while busy ◆ Icon and Lister snapshots are stored separately from Workbench - so you could snapshot your CD-ROM icons! ◆ Listers can now display a background picture/pattern ◆ Internal Opus CLI to quickly test commands & ARexx scripts ◆ Many new internal commands and many new ARexx commands have been added or extended with new features. You can now even add your own internal commands! £49.99



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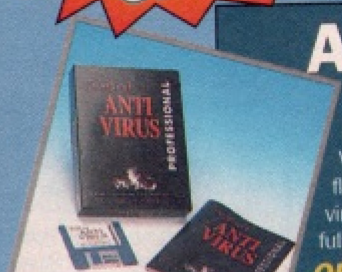
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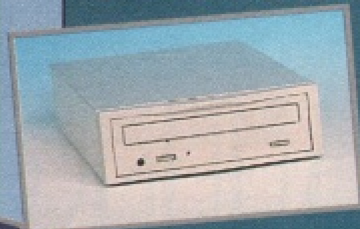
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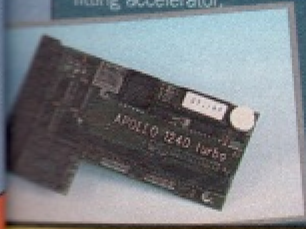
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The Amiga in North America

Now the Amiga has returned home to North America, we investigate just what that vast continent has to offer ... the many faces of the North American Amiga market.

Ah, North America. The vast New World, so often misunderstood – even when it comes to Amiga computers. Unlike the UK and mainland Europe, the Amiga failed to make a lasting dent in mainstream personal computing – despite the fact that for a time, large department stores couldn't keep A500s in stock. But as with any industry, the retail memory is very short-term and the Amiga has faded into public obscurity.

Of course, obscurity has a strange way of making the Amiga flourish. After all, hordes of Amigas have been sold on the continent, bringing many users back from other machines. Often these sales are immediately associated with video work, and while it is true that a good many Amigas have been sold to video enthusiasts and hobbyists, the sheer numbers indicate that these are by far a minority — a very vocal minority at times, but still a minority group. No, in North America there's the same eclectic collection of Amiga users you'll find anywhere, from dedicated computer enthusiasts to game players, to productivity fiends and educational barons.

How have the times been treating us? Well, of course, the death of Commodore hurt everyone worldwide. Unfortunately, Escom's emergence was no great comfort to North American users, since Escom had no established presence on the continent. The selection of SMG, who had acted as Commodore's service organisation for warranty work and repairs, as continental distributor ended earlier this year in a strange set of circumstances and an even more bizarre corporate letter.

QuikPak, the contracted US manufacturer of Amiga 4000Ts, informed SMG that due to their insufficient order quantities, they were effectively terminated as distributors. Not to be outdone, SMG sent a letter full of apocalyptic imagery to a surprised online community, and departed the Amiga market. QuikPak has acted ever since as distribution coordinator for North America, selling in quantity to whoever can meet criteria.



That criteria, of course, means you want to buy a lot of Amiga 4000Ts at the going rate, which is not an insignificant sum of money. Still, dedicated Amiga enthusiasts and professionals have turned out for the machine. As for A1200s, they tend to be in exceptionally short supply. Often, distributors and parts dealers are able to obtain A1200 motherboards, cases, keyboards, etc. from old Commodore inventory and these resurface in the form of rebuilt A1200s or refitted tower units. Some AT-manufactured A1200s have made their way across the ocean though. The oft-overlooked 'other' AGA machine, the CD32, sold very well once the SX-1 and lower-cost CD32s became available after the Commodore auction and sale. Now, due to their rather limited production runs, they are all but impossible to find.

The North American market was exceptionally hesitant when it came to Escom. In fact, to a large degree everyone was in a "wait-and-see" mode. Last summer, however, a pair of Canadian Amiga shows broke the stalemate and encouraged more Amiga activism, which can be seen in spades these days. More on that later.

So, you wonder, what's going on in the Amiga market over there? Here's the face of the Amiga community in a number of different capacities.

The Face of the Amiga in North America: *Activism*

Despite the best efforts of a number of Amiga enthusiasts nationwide, virtually no major retailer of computer products will carry Amiga hardware or software. A shame, to be sure. That doesn't keep people from trying to give the Amiga a more public image, however. A particularly notable example is that of Keith Cagle of Virtual Reality Productions, who spearheaded an effort to expose the Olympic video production corps to the Amiga. In all, six Amiga 4000T/Toaster-Flyer systems found their way onto the video production floor.

The software side

The Final Writer vs. Wordworth debate is neverending as both programs continue to be developed. Softwood in the US keeps up their end of the bargain by continually upgrading Final Writer, as well as supporting their other productivity titles. Other major and legendary Amiga software

companies, such as SoftLogik, authors of PageStream, also continue their Amiga development even if their flagship products are ported to other platforms.

The other side of the coin is the company that in some ways is an ironic success story – born as an independent company right around the time of Commodore's demise, Nova Design has done very well with their ImageFX graphics processing package since taking distribution as well as development into their own hands. Based on the success and frequent upgrades of ImageFX, Nova has also recently acquired the source for Aladdin 4D and a new version with revamped interface and ImageFX cross-capabilities is due in the fall.

Fred Fish has renamed his company Cronus and now deals in several different platforms of software but the Amiga is still high on his list and work on the Amiga Developer Environment (ADE) continues. ADE is a full-featured, free C development package for Amiga coders.

Dale Larson is still very much involved in the Amiga market with his company, Intangible Assets Manufacturing. IAM has recently acquired publishing rights to MRBackup (or Mr. Backup, as Larson prefers these days), and continues to support its other titles, including Dave Haynie's DiskSalv. Of note here is that the relationship between IAM and Fourth Level Developments, publishers of Ami-File Safe, ended some time ago.

And then there's the black sheep software development – the return of gaming to North America. You'd probably be lying if you said you'd never heard of Capital Punishment, the imminent beat-em-up from Click Boom of Toronto, Canada. They've got more works in the planning stages as well. And in an interesting move, Bigg Wolf of the US has taken over publishing rights to the FMV CD32 title Final Gate.

As for hardware?

I recently engaged in a discussion with another Amiga fan over whether or not the focus of Amiga hardware development had shifted to Germany. To a large extent, this is true, but not entirely so. DKB continues to manufacture and develop new products for the Amiga line. Most recently, DKB released a pair of SCSI-II accelerators for A2000, 3000, and 4000 machines, and has a networking card in the works. Their WildFire A2000/060 card has been shipping for some time now.

The former Great Valley Products is no more, but GVP-M is carrying on the name. Currently, GVP-M manufactures and distributes select new GVP and TekMagic boards, notable in that some models allow the mixing of GVP memory Simms and standard memory Simms. (Other GVP boards have adopted the industry standard outright.) Available now are A2000 and A3000/4000 68060 accelerators, and 040/060 models for the A500 and A1200 are planned as well.

Development of Amiga portables and luggables is taking an interesting turn. For some time now, Silent Paw has been developing and promoting its PAWS A1200 and A4000 units, which accept motherboards for the respective machines and incorporate them in custom cases complete with batteries and LCD. Now, QuikPak has unveiled a preliminary design for a new A4000-type luggable machine, to be AC-powered only but with a new motherboard that boasts a video slot, Zorro slots, and is 040 or 060 on the board with up to 128Mb memory expansion standard (no accelerator card required). QuikPak estimates completion in six months and a ballpark cost of US$3000.

Rave and dance club types will want to keep their eye on Atlanta a bit longer and watch for the release of the Geodesic Designs' MindEYE. Based on the old Mindlight, the MindEYE should be lots of rhythmic enjoyment when it is released.

The Face of the Amiga in North America: *European Distribution*

As ever, a toss-up. Some companies are extremely reliable, competent, and consistent in providing an imported line of hardware or software. Oregon Research, in particular, has done a good job in tandem with HiSoft of the UK to provide products seamlessly. Some products just take a bit longer than would be hoped for to arrive, or aren't aggressively imported, like most games. The first Apollo accelerator cards on the continent will be selling shortly.

Cronus is always prompt and up to date in its support for Amiga users and the Aminet via selling compact discs from Schatztruhe in Germany. However, there are still a few distribution coups de grace that remain to be made in North America.

> **"The TAC want solid currency power over Amiga goods."**





▲ Toronto-based Click Boom have been causing quite a stir over here in the UK.

◀ Two Amiga fans discuss the finer points of computing with such a great machine.

The users

My employment with VIScorp as a communications consultant gave me a unique opportunity recently to meet with four different groups of users in a two week period. What better way to base an evaluation of how things are out in the Amiga trenches?

Montreal Amiga Convention '96

The first of what looks to be a small series of Canadian Amiga shows this year, the August Amiga Convention was held in a series of rooms in a downtown hotel. At first, the layout was confusing for all involved – dealers were broken up into four medium-sized rooms adjoining a



◀ The PAWS A1200 on display at the Montreal Amiga Convention '96.



▲ David Rosen, VP of Business Development for VIScorp (seen here centre) paid close attention to the goings on at the Montreal show.

wide hallway. The system worked quite well, however.

In the first large room, two Canadian dealers peered across the room at each other while smaller displays attracted crowds. National Amiga, a successful online Amiga dealership and the dealer with the most table space in the show, had a wide array of new and rarely used hardware to show for itself. Piled across the aisle was Wonder Computers International, the new company formed from the ashes of Wonder Computers Inc. Wonder drew significantly better sales for itself on day two, when a shipment of Phase 5 CyberVision and CyberStorm Mk II 060 arrived.

Next to Wonder sat Silent Paw and the PAWS 1200 display. The screen quality is quite good but the case dimensions of the A1200 unit may prove to be a stopping point for those looking for a true laptop. But the unit was up and running and quite functional with 060 board installed.

Around the horn sat Syzygy, the authors and publishers of The Digital Universe. DU was up and running, and I learned that the upcoming PC and Mac Digital Universes will come on CD-ROM.

Beside Syzygy was nestled a small demonstration area for Bob Fischer, the marketing head for Nova Design. ImageFX is now looking stunning especially when showcased by a real expert like Bob.

Across the hall lay IAM's table space, which bordered the dealers Gfx Base on the one hand and ClickBOOM on the other. The final attendee for that room's party is QuikPak – nothing like a good A1200 motherboard to cause a disagreement.

Keeping up with the technology is easy when you're as involved in the sales as Amiga dealers. At the show, The Computer and You and ValleySoft wanted very much to protect their end-user investments. Valleysoft brought a huge collection of Amiga games to the show, of such size nothing came close to touching it.

The show was attended by myself and David Rosen, VP of Business Development for VIScorp, as well as by Katherine Nelson, Assistant Editor of Amiga Report.

Ottawa, Canada

After Montreal, we found ourselves in Ottawa, at the new Wonder Computers headquarters and later addressing a user group meeting. WCi was open for business on an unusually hot day when I was in town. The local users harnessed the energy of the group and tried to bring a significant number of stories and history, but the plan unfortunately backfired as few Amigans were able to make it out to the standard meeting place. Those that came expressed concern in what they perceived as a lack of vision in VIScorp compared to others in the Amiga market, namely Phase 5.

> **"Of course, nobody and nothing's fate is entirely secure."**

Atlanta, Georgia

The Atlanta crowd was mighty happy to be the first to hear about the upcoming Amiga QuikPak portable, so some good news is always better than none. The user group meeting was well attended and an event in itself, including an Amiga game show. (I personally hosted a round of Amiga Jeopardy). Atlanta Amiga users are relying on solid factual developments and deals to be made to ensure the continuation of work on the Amiga OS and hardware. When I have the issues answered, I will be sure to share my findings.

Chicago, Illinois

Above all else, the Amiga users of The Amiga Connection (TAC) want to see real solid currency power over Amiga goods, and want to see a new Amiga generation ASAP – even if the specification is not to everyone's liking. In Chicago, a small but vocal video-using group requires at the very least competent software emulation as well as a fully acceptable lead time between commercial packages and commercial development packages.

The future

Of course, nobody and nothing's fate is entirely secure. But, within the best of our knowledge and understanding, this next six months should be a very interesting time for the Amiga. Not only will VIScorp take final control of the machines, but the inventory will transfer and new VIScorp products, both set-top and desktop, will hit. If a stopgap machine or bundle is made available, it will certainly be done within this time frame.

The print market in North America is picking up a bit. The Informer, a new newsletter, has sprung up to challenge for subscriber dollars. Amiga Legacy, a new ad-funded Amiga magazine, is in test-marketing now.

And from now until March, a number of Amiga expositions present themselves to one's attention.

In October, Amicon is planned for Central Ohio. Registration for dealers and visitors is being taken now. For November, Amazing Software is reportedly planning a show. In December, Wonder Computers intends to operate another World of Amiga Toronto show. Add to that the plans to hold a show near Washington DC next February and the upcoming Gateway Amiga Show in St. Louis next March, and it should be an interesting time for hometown and travelling Amiga fans alike.

The users that pride the Amiga on its ease of use don't always point out that while the Amiga is easy to use, it is not always easy on its users. In North America, some issues are harder to deal with than others, but overall it's not a bad place to live if you're looking to enjoy the company of an Amiga. ■

Jason Compton

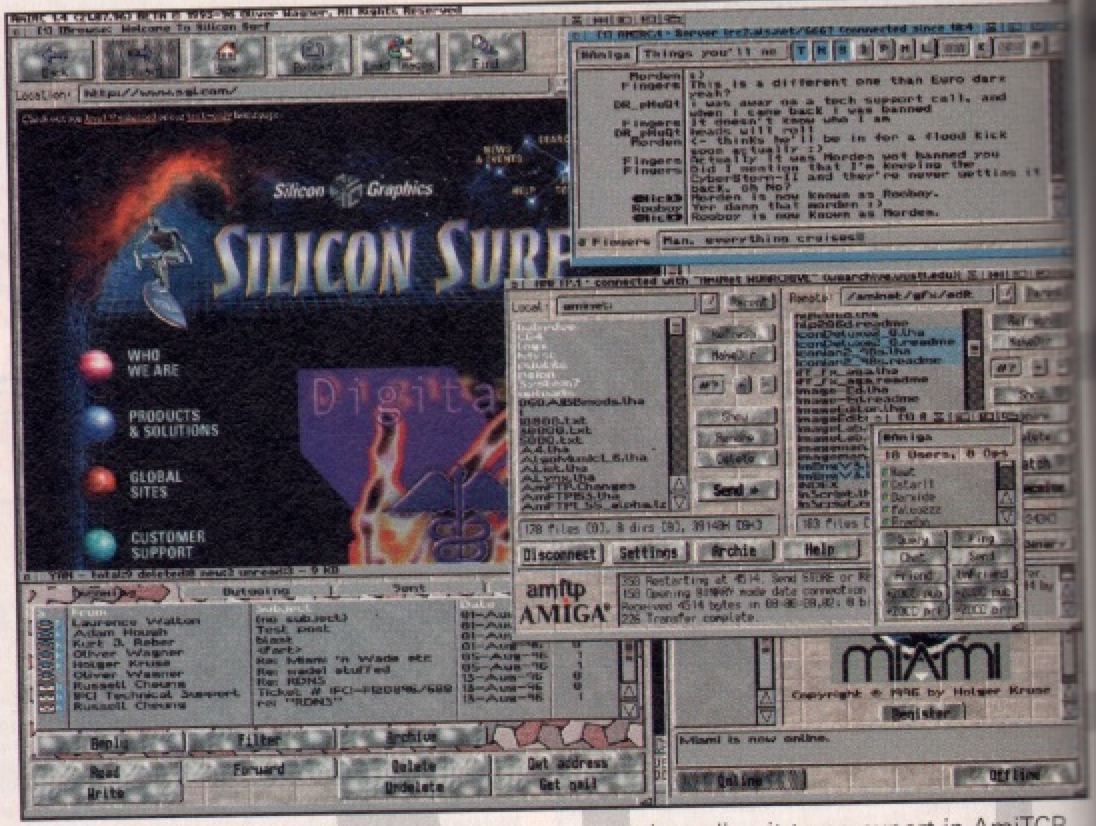
Jason Compton is CU Amiga Magazine's Stateside correspondent. His regular column is normally in our news pages.



Another ▶ Montreal show attendee, Katherine Nelson (Amiga Report Magazine) takes time out for the camera.

Next generation Internet access

The Amiga is a brilliant Internet machine but only now does it have the potential to eclipse all others. We examine the new generation of Amiga Net software ...



It can't have escaped anyone's attention how much coverage the Internet gets in the press these days – including CU Amiga Magazine. The Internet has exploded in popularity to the point where experts and casual tinkerers alike have Internet accounts and increasingly go 'surfing' in the evening after work instead of mucking about with that Sensible Rugby 2097.

For a long time, I and other Amiga Net heads have acknowledged the PC's superiority when it comes to accessing the Internet. That's not to say that it was better to use a PC since even though the Amiga's software was to an extent substandard, its multitasking nature and the sense of community spirit that got what we needed programmed, made us stick to our guns. The PC didn't have it easy either, this was in the days before Windows got to 1995 and while it had all the killer applications, you had to be an expert on that platform to get connected.

Sandra Bullock

However, when the press hype machine stepped in with the help of Sandra Bullock convincing us that the world was full of beautiful female net nerds, software companies began to wise up. On the PC easy-to-use software appeared which would even run under Windows. Generally speaking, easy-to-use software is cut down what-you-need-only type software which uses GUIs to set up the programs so that one needs not become an expert in text config files and carry overs from the rocket scientist Unix computing platform.

On the Amiga, folks who did know all about the hideously complex software were building front-ends so that people could actually stand a chance of installing it. AmiTCP in particular is the most complex item of software I can ever recall getting to grips with and for all that, it doesn't do very much other than act as the go-between from Internet programs and the Internet. That's not to say AmiTCP was bad, without it we never would have been on the Internet, it just was/is over complex and not a real Amiga application such as we have come to love and expect.

In order to set-up AmiTCP on a provider with no dedicated installer, you needed a good knowledge of Internet and AmiTCP despite there being no real documentation on the latter. Third party utilities needed to be obtained in order to even get this system working. The PPP protocol which is used to forge the link over the modem requires a shareware driver which also must be configured adding to the woes. When things didn't work (which was common) you were pretty much on your own short of archiving all of AmiTCP's configs up and sending it to an expert in AmiTCP. As it was, this only served to dissuade many from getting on-line or at least using an Amiga to do it.

Software overload

Even while the Amiga's ownership has been uncertain and the market has seen some decline, the business of Comms on the Amiga has only been growing. It was looking pretty good a few months ago and that was before this month when we were bombarded by Internet software for the Amiga. Not just any Internet software but extremely good Internet software and software which looks like Amiga programs ought to. The first being Miami, the new shareware TCP/IP stack. This technical term is what's used to describe what AmiTCP is, for a full review turn to page 51. Miami's commercial counterpart, HiSoft's TermiteTCP, is also firmly seated in the easy-to-use category. It's placed head-to-head with Miami on page 50 this month.

With either of these programs it's now far far easier to get an Amiga on-line, some might even say only now possible, with Internet providers which





do not have specific Amiga installers. Those installers such as 'CountB' created for Demon Internet Services Amiga users, perform the hard work in setting up and installing AmiTCP. Not much use if you don't want to use Demon, though. Even the software provided for CU Amiga's InternetFCI offer was a lengthy Arexx script which created all of the configuration files for AmiTCP. Now those days are over, no-one needs a specific installer (though making them is now much easier) and since the new packages are of sufficient standard, Internet providers will start to support them and the Amiga officially as is already the case with InternetFCI.

So many machines

So considering that it's now far easier to get on the Internet with Miami and TermiteTCP, how does the Amiga compare when it comes to the Internet clients? These are the programs which run simultaneously with the so-called TCP/IP stack - when your Amiga is on the Internet. The client software can talk to the Internet and any machine on the Internet (which is millions all over the world) using the TCP/IP stack as an interpreter.

The most common and popular Internet client is a World Wide Web browser or WWW for short. This is actually the newest popular service type that's available on the Internet and it enables navigating around information sites all over the world, viewing documents including text and pictures, driven only by clicks of a mouse. It's a beautiful system and never before has mankind had such a resource freely available in their own home. WWW browsers have now come to do even more than the basic browsing, they browse text-only newsgroup conferences and read/write E-mail too. Mostly this is due to the industry standard PC/Mac browser Netscape trying to take over not just WWW but all Internet services.

It's this area where the Amiga was at it's most weakest. Originally there was the text only ALynx and the amazingly buggy and crash prone AMosaic whose nature went a long way to falsely starting MUI's bad reputation. In these days, browsing on an Amiga was clearly inferior to the PC and Mac though luckily things have got better. AWeb arrived, a reasonably simple MUI-less web browser which at least brought stable graphics based browsing back to the Amiga. Later the freeware Voyager browser supported a much greater part of the HTML standard (see the HTML tutorial in Wired World) than AMosaic and AWeb. In fact it still does the job and in the space of a few months rapidly became the Amiga's most popular browser. Things looked better on the Amiga but still a long way behind Netscape.

Making headway

That was until IBrowse 1.0 was released this month and to a lesser extent AWeb-II. Finally, the Amiga has a browser which understands the bulk of HTML, supports tables (but still not frames) and has wonderful progressive loading which means pictures appear as blank boxes right away but gradually fill in as they are downloaded. IBrowse even supports anim GIFs which is a fairly new Netscape addition. AWeb-II can't boast such power but it also has its own array of features which may suit the perpetual MUI hater. So on this front, Amiga Web browsers are perhaps three quarters of the way there, with vigorous development continuing. I never thought I'd see browsing on an Amiga look so good as with IBrowse 1.0, a graphics board and a Cyberstorm-II. The speed was superior to my Pentium and it also left some memory free to run the other clients as seen in the screenshot here.

The next most popular Internet client are Email clients. Most everyone should have heard of Email. It allows you to send text messages (and binary/pictures with the MIME standard) to anyone else in the world in minutes. Here the Amiga was already very well catered for giving the PC a good run for its money but just this month there was yet more activity on this front also; YAM 1.3 standing for Yet Another Mailer was released which is a wonderful MUI based Email client with all the necessary code to communicate to the Internet provider built-in. Being incredibly easy to set up and sporting powerful features such as Email filtering of mails into separate folders and built-in MIME support, YAM is a certain winner.

Amiga slaughters PC

Since we're on the Internet, it would be a little pointless to continue sending off for PD disks now, wouldn't it? This is because you don't have to with FTP or File Transfer Protocol clients. You can download files from any FTP site and what's more, start as many FTP clients as you like and download as many programs as you like, all simultaneously. It's a tremendously handy resource and here the Amiga slaughters the PC. The PC's top two FTP clients are as nothing compared to AmFTP, AmiFTP, mFTP and the amazing FTP Mount which creates an FTP: virtual device on the Amigas powerful operating system. PC FTP clients can't hardly manage a resume which means when their system crashes (note when and not if), they're doomed to download the whole file again.

Newsgroup reading/writing isn't brilliant on the Amiga. There's packages to do so but they are complex and confusing while others are simply incompetent. However, work progresses even here. There's also the IRC or Internet Relay Chat, while allows global real time conferences. Here the PC has nothing to remotely touch AmIRC and others. This isn't a statement of preference, it's a statement of fact built upon the features supported including the new IRC standard which the PC hasn't begun to support. The Amiga has its share of excellent Internet servers also, such as AWS for serving WWW pages and FTPd for running your own FTP site. Here the Amiga benefits because of its similar nature to Unix making ports relatively easily.

The future of the Amiga as an Internet box was already assured but now it's positively shining. Long live the Amiga on the net. Hip hip hooray.

Mat Bettinson

Shining future

Multitasking is what really pulls the Amiga out in front. While running all those Internet clients simultaneously, none slow to an unusable speed unless of course, your modem runs out of steam. Not like using a PC where despite the hefty CPU power, jerky, non smooth behaviour is commonplace when running more than one client. There's also memory considerations; Netscape 3 Gold on the PC likes to have at least 10Mb of memory free before it gets out of bed. This is food for thought considering some owners of low-spec Amigas complained about MUI using a couple of hundred K. One thing's for sure, given the same amount of memory, an Amiga can run many many more clients at acceptable speed than even a relatively powerful PC.



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Screen Scene



Sex, violence and football feature in our reviews section this month. For sex and violence see Capital Punishment, for footy action see Kick Off '96. And there are lots of new titles in development for you to check out as well. Good news indeed.



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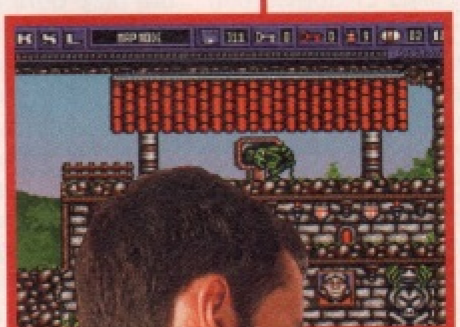
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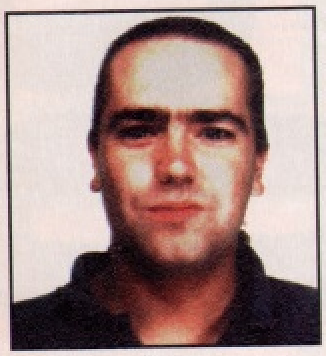
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Reach for the stars

In the first of a brand new series, we talk to people who helped make the Amiga a revolutionary games machine. This month: Sensi's John Hare ...



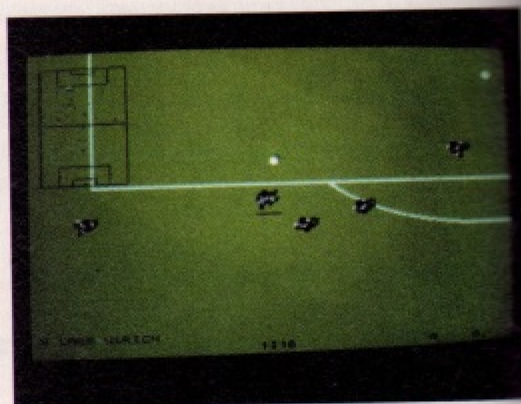
▲ JAJ Hare in an Essex photo booth pose.

Name: ***Jonathan Albert James Hare***
Age: ***30***
Born: ***Ilford, Essex***
Occupation: ***Partner of Sensible Software, responsible for direction, graphics and design of games***
Biggest Success: ***Sensible Soccer series***

CU: ***When and what was your first involvement in the computer games industry?***
JH: "In May 1985, I started to do some graphics for a Spectrum game called Sodov The Sorcerer which my mate and soon to be partner, Chris Yates, was converting for a company called LT Software in Laindon in Essex."
CU: ***And at what point did you first start exploring the potential of the Amiga?***
JH: "It was with the conversion of International 3D Tennis from the C64. We were latecomers into the 16-bit fold and to us the Amiga was a bit of a begrudging step seeing as we were doing so well on the C64 – a bit like the way we feel now about the PC compared to the Amiga."

"Thanks for everything Amiga, you've changed this man's life forever."

CU: ***How important a role has the Amiga played to the industry as an affordable games and development machine?***
JH: "The Amiga is the best thing that's ever happened to the games industry – it had great potential for developers and was colossally cheap to develop for. Plus Amiga buyers have always been the most games orientated buyers. This for us is an ideal market considering the type of software we normally produce but, unfortunately, not everyone puts gameplay first – not even games buyers."
CU: ***What have been the key titles in the Amiga's lifetime as a games machine?***
JH: Defender Of The Crown – 'wow' we all said.
Xenon II – 'It's like an arcade machine' we all said.
Stunt Car Racer – 'Look at that amazingly playable 3D.'
Kick Off / Kick Off 2 – 'At last, a proper footy game.'
Populous – 'Ooo, look, a bit of strategy.'
Sensible Soccer – I'm so glad it's stood the test of time so well.
Worms – It proved there was still a bit of life in the old bugger.
CU: ***Which Amiga games did you (or still do) play during your spare time?***
JH: "Sensible Soccer/SWOS, Kick Off 2, Stunt Car Racer, Speedball 2, Leisure Suit Larry ... the Perfect Pectorals, Rock Star Ate My Hamster, Pinball Wizard."
CU: ***Before Sensible Soccer was released, what were your thoughts and opinions on the phenomenally successful Kick Off and Kick Off 2?***
JH: "During the development of Megalomania, myself and Chris Chapman, the Sensi programmer, played the Kick Off games virtually non-stop. We started to pull Kick Off 2 apart – we looked at the way players homed in on the ball and the viewpoint and all the things which annoyed us about this just a little short from perfect game. We then worked out ways in which we could improve Kick Off 2 and add some of our own touches as well."
CU: ***Tell me about tiny sprites which have become something of a Sensible trademark?***
JH: "For the Amiga it is perfect. Graphic memory is at a premium and they are obviously less memory intensive, allowing you to have more individual frames. They were used at the last minute in Megalomania as a way of representing the battles that were taking place – they were small because we wanted as many as possible on the screen at once. In Soccer, Cannon Fodder and Sensible Golf, the small sprites were used to give the player maximum field of vision so that he had more time to react to things going on in the environment. Therefore, situations could be approached in a more strategic manner than if you were restricted to big graphics."

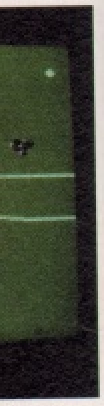


▲ A very old, bendy screenshot of Kick Off, from the days when magazines used cameras instead of screen grabbers!

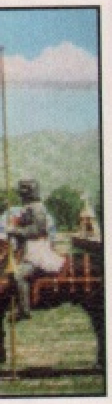


▲ Defender of the Crown – "Wow".

CU: ***How strong and well positioned do you feel Sensible is in the market?***
JH: "Very strong in the UK, average in Europe, nobodies in Japan and the US."
CU: ***How important has the Amiga been to the growth and success of Sensible Software?***
JH: "It has been the most important thing that has ever happened to this company. Thanks for everything Amiga, you've changed this man's life forever."



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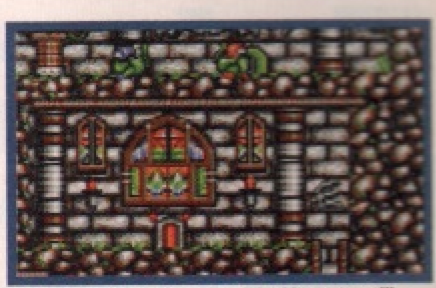
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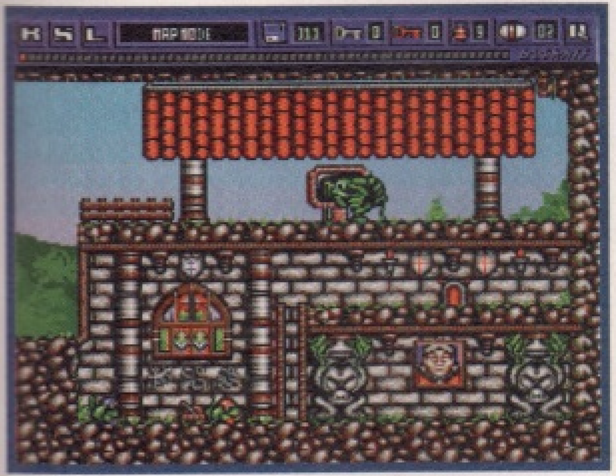
Bograts The Puzzling Misadventure

■ **Due for release: September** ■ **Publisher: Vulcan Software**



▲ My two charges, luckily not looking very ratlike.

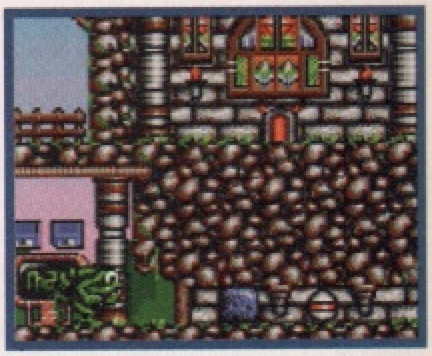
Bograts! What an unfortunate name for a game! I don't think the title would make me "reach for the adoption papers" as Vulcan claims we will. Why do Vulcan foresee a massive paternal urge? Well, we are supposed to fall in love with our 'cute' little charges (bograts) who we have to guide to safety. For me, the name bograts just conquers up images of large smelly hairy things that hang around sewers and public lavatories and have the occasional bit part in films like Mission Impossible. Yeuch. The intro screen of a huge rat doesn't make it any easier for me to like them despite the pathos evoking line: 'it's a hard life being a bograt'. Also, the overall aim of the game of guiding your rats to safety and reaching Bog castle leaves me cold. Huge turds and toilet rolls all piled together in one monstrous construction is what comes to my mind. Who'd want to visit that? Luckily enough once you get past the intro screen, the characters are kinda cute looking and you can't tell that they are supposed to be smelly bograts which is a good thing.



My prejudices aside, Bograts is a latter day incarnation of a game called Penguins which was due to be released by Alternative Software. Today in its present form it's a puzzle type game, a bit like Timekeepers or, if you're being kind, Lemmings. You've got to lead the way for your tiny chums navigating their way through about sixty levels negotiating all the perils that lie ahead such as the traps, blockages and creatures being generally unhelpful. But you've got a few weapons up your sleeve to help you get past these, including some nifty dynamite for those obstructions that won't budge. So this should add to the fun. Perhaps a few turd-like characters in there would add a little bit more to the mayhem. We'll see.

So far, Bograts is looking good. It's in the distinctive Vulcan style and the current backdrops are not unlike some from the Fortress of Eve game. It seems easy to get around and there is a handy strip of icons at the top for your weapons some of which have yet to be developed. Bograts will be for all Amigas with 1Mb and we should have a review soon. ■

Lisa Collins



▲ Oh, blockage ahead, time for a bomb.

Micro Mortal Tennis

■ **Due for release: TBA** ■ **Publisher: TBA**

You've got to hand it to the Italians, they've got savvy. They're quick witted enough to work out everything in millions of Lira when the rest of Europe would just get bogged down without a calculator. They're brave enough to throw away everyone else's conception of what a car should be (ie bland) and come up with something like the new Alfa Spider, my must have, fave car of the decade (and it would take me a couple of decades to save for one), all that and pretty hot at Amiga games too. There must be something in the olive oil (and I'm not referring to Popeye).



▲ Oh dear, tempers flare on the court!

Witness Shadow Fighter, witness Breathless, witness Virtual Karting (OK, well, forget about Virtual Karting). Now witness Mikro Mortal Tennis, and play our cover demo. A company called CPU Italian System teamed with Skywards Software has taken it upon themselves to give us the unusual combination of a tennis game crossed with a beat 'em up. Strange but true. The game is a playable little bash as far as tennis goes, not quite on a par with Audiogenics' Tennis Champs, but fast and furious nonetheless, while set piece in-jokes from the Mortal Kombat fighting genre spice things up from time to time.







The set up and menus are pretty comprehensive with arcade and realistic play options, league and season settings. Control is easy enough too, though serving takes practice but it has incorporated the one thing which I berated Tennis Champs for the lack of: diving shots. Timing has to be more precise than in Tennis Champs too as to hit the ball you must first press fire to raise your racket and then let it go to hit the ball (having put some direction in first). As you'll notice from the demo some shots are difficult to judge because of the size of the sprites and the method of shooting the ball, but hopefully these inaccuracies will be solved in the final version of the game.

What you won't see from the demo are the set-pieces mentioned above. These include sticking a sword in the umpire if he gives you a duff call, pigs that run onto the court and a tiny flasher who appears from time to time. If you enjoy a giggle these might tempt you, but I suspect they might also jar after a while, especially as the real business of this game is tennis. Anyway, we'll have a review of Mikro Mortal Tennis next month, so in the meantime find your local Alfa Romeo dealer, go down and gawp at the Spider. I might see you there. ■

Martin Davies

Enigma

■ Due for release: October ■ Publisher: OTM

You may remember a while ago that we did an article on a company called Intersect Development who served as an inspiration to us all. Faced with less and less games coming out for the Amiga they did the decent thing and decided to produce a chockload themselves. What they did come up with was mighty impressive collection. Alas, however, it seems that it may be some time before any of these creations see the light of day. For example, one of these games was Atrophy which we previewed not so long ago. However, internal wrangling within Intersect Development caused delays on any games being released and OTM who were going to publish Atrophy are now no longer going to do so. OTM instead, are concentrating on Enigma from Centillion a new company which is made up of one of the original members of Intersect Development. Enigma is a similar concept to Atrophy, a scrolling shoot 'em up, not unlike Disposable Hero where you get to blast through the various worlds in your spaceship blowing away anything that gets in your way and picking up weaponry along the way.



▲ Centillion ask that you don't judge the graphics here as they are not finished yet.





Centillion are very proud of the graphics in Enigma stressing that they will all be 3D rendered graphics and have requested that you don't judge the game by the current screenshot shown here because the game is way off being finished. The programmers are also keen to point out that all the backing music was created on the Amiga using a MIDI system and say that it will be superb.

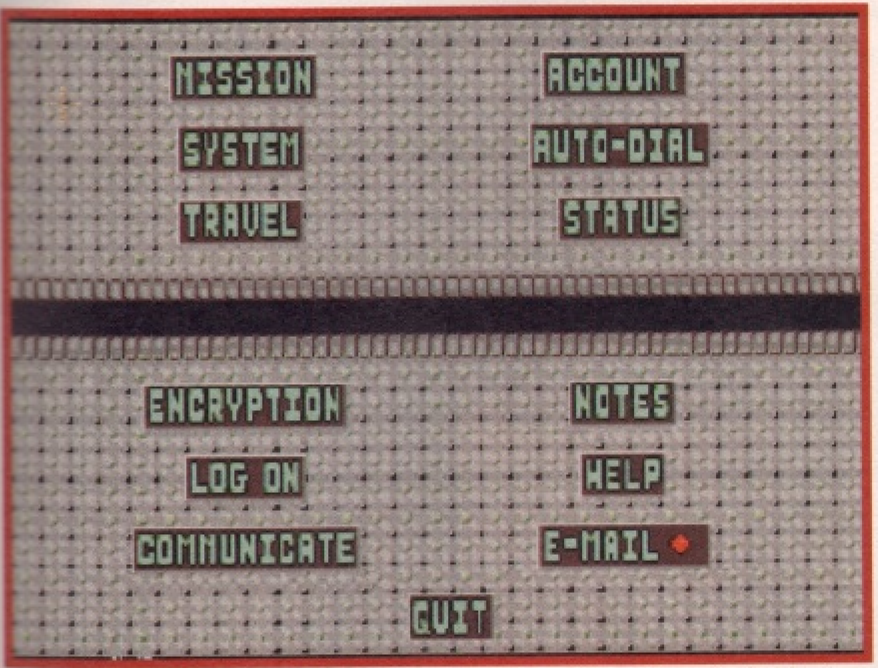
We cannot vouch for the music at this point as the demo we saw did not have any music. However, it ran very smoothly and the graphics are clearer and tighter than, say, Atrophy. Amongst other fancy bits planned for the game there is a simultaneous two-player option which you can use the shared lives option with to add extra time to your gameplaying. Enigma will be AGA only and we should have a review next month. ■

Lisa Collins

Access Denied Mission 2

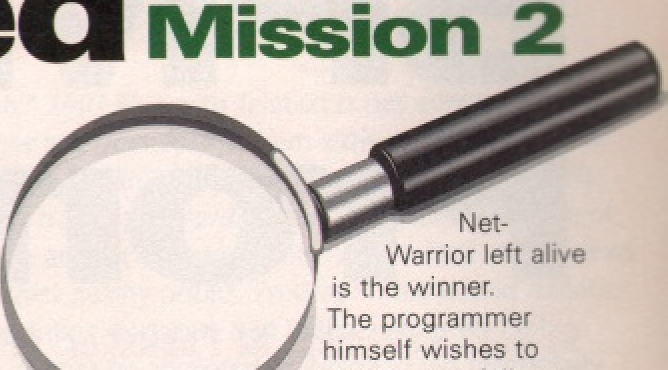
■ Due for release: TBA ■ Publisher: Solo Software

I like it very much when somebody out there writing a new game, tries to do something almost completely different, that no one has seen before. Not for a long time anyway, but who tries to take an original idea a step further. Take this preview of Access Denied Mission – 2 for example. Although, I thought that the first game was initially disappointing there is still a marvellous opportunity for someone to create a stunning, atmospheric game idea and make it exciting. Imagine, playing a sort of espionage type game that is so realistic, you'd think you were War Games with the real super Pentagon computer in the U.S.



▲ Don't judge a book (or screenshot) by its cover. Access Denied 2 could be more interesting than it looks.

Have your spy outfit to hand before you play the game as the plot is similar to the original: ie a world-wide hacking text-based adventure. However, Access Denied's second game, Mission 2, also contains a sort of breakout style sub-game called Net-Warriors, which will play an important part of the main game itself. Since the object of the game is to protect your power source from being destroyed by the Death Sphere, the last Net-Warrior left alive is the winner.



The programmer himself wishes to attract a cult following with his games and hope to include more depth and better, more sinister missions. He also says he would like to do a sort of Access Denied disk based magazine which would cover all real life with computer hacking.

There are lots of possibilities. I hope Access Denied Mission-2 looks a lot better and plays a lot better too than the first game, because testing your finger hacking skills on the keyboard and powers of concentration in world of computer hacking is great fun, when it's done right. Trust CU Amiga Magazine to keep you informed on a review appearing soon. ■

Mark Forbes

BPM Promotions



■ **DFR: November** ■ **Publisher: BPM Promotions**

Reality comes a step closer with the review of a demo game pack for the game engine from Belfast ...

A couple of months ago we previewed a game engine called Reality. It promised many things, not least providing the layperson with the capability of producing reasonable class games with little or no experience of programming or graphics. Now BPM promotions, the company behind the package have released a series of games which have been produced using the engine as a demonstration of its capabilities. The collection is available for £12.99 direct from BPM (see boxout below for full details) and they will also provide a demo disk of the product itself.

The pack contains eight games on eight disks, which is a reasonable £1.40 odd per game, similar to what you would get through a PD house. The games are of varying quality but for what you can produce on a generic game engine they're pretty impressive.



▲ Charlies Treasure is one of a series of four games.



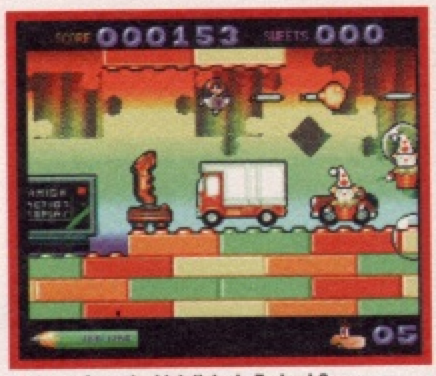
▲ Joker Poker looks the most convincing so far.

Eight to a pack

The pack starts off with Wrath Of Gwendor, a familiar sounding name with a game whose style of play is very familiar too. It's like a PD version of Ghosts 'n' Goblins with a hero whom you control on a horizontally scrolling playing level, fighting off demons and creatures and evading traps along the way. It's a bit stunted as far as smoothness goes, but nevertheless reasonably enjoyable. The biggest collection on the pack is the Charlie Chimp series which encompasses four games in the platform adventure style. Here a cute chimpanzee has to battle rats and, well, some other nasty things which I can't readily describe to get to the end of the level, solving puzzle along the way. There are four games using this character and one, the original Charlie Chimp, is a more basic platform orientated game than the others. The other character to see more than one outing is appropriately enough called Seemore, Seemore Doolittle to be precise, and his games are horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups in style, and all the better for it.



▲ The original Charlie Chimp is straightforward platform game.



▲ Lots of novelty high jinks in Toyland Caper.

Both are reasonably enjoyable ... in fact very enjoyable if you consider they are only the equivalent of £1.40 each. Don't expect anything spectacular and you'll not be disappointed, these are a cut above most PD games.

Of all the titles in the pack the arcade game Joker Poker is the most convincing of all. It will only appeal to arcade poker fans, but it is a very commercial looking and professional effort. If I had to pick out one game here that could reasonably be sold alone as a professional product this is it.

Potential

Overall the pack demonstrates very well the capabilities of Reality. None of the games here are likely to set the world on fire, but some are very playable and even professional. I'm now looking forward even more to reviewing the final product. Roll on next issue. ■

Martin Davies

Soccer Sensible

Here's a strange one which I must admit I thought wouldn't get past the lawyers, but the lads at BPM insist that it's cool. Hmmmm. Anyway it's a quiz game, not part of the pack previewed on the rest of the page but intended to be sold separately. It's very straightforward, you answer multiple choice questions (from over 1000 allegedly) and if you get it right you score a goal on a real Sensi pitch (as can be seen from the screenshot). A nice arcade quiz, but hold on fellas, that Sensi pitch is damn accurate. Have you shown it to Jon Hare?





▲ More Toyland Caper fun and mayhem.

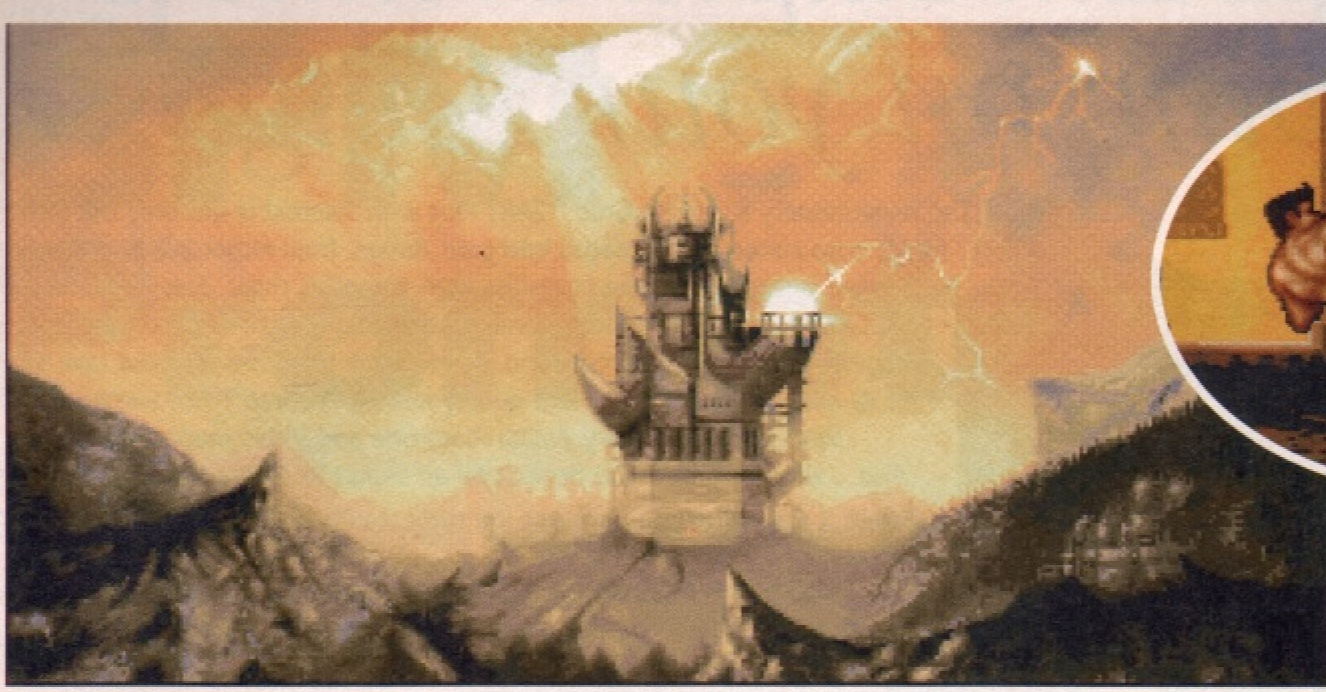


▲ Wrath of Gwendor is a bit like Ghosts 'n' Goblins.

Where to get it!

BPM promotions are nearly finished their Reality Game Engine, if you want to get hold of a demo of the package (for free, excluding p+p) or you want to get hold of this selection of games then write to the following address or contact BPM on the number at the top of the page.

BPM Promotions, 8 Magnolia Park, Dunmurray, Belfast, BT17 ODS.





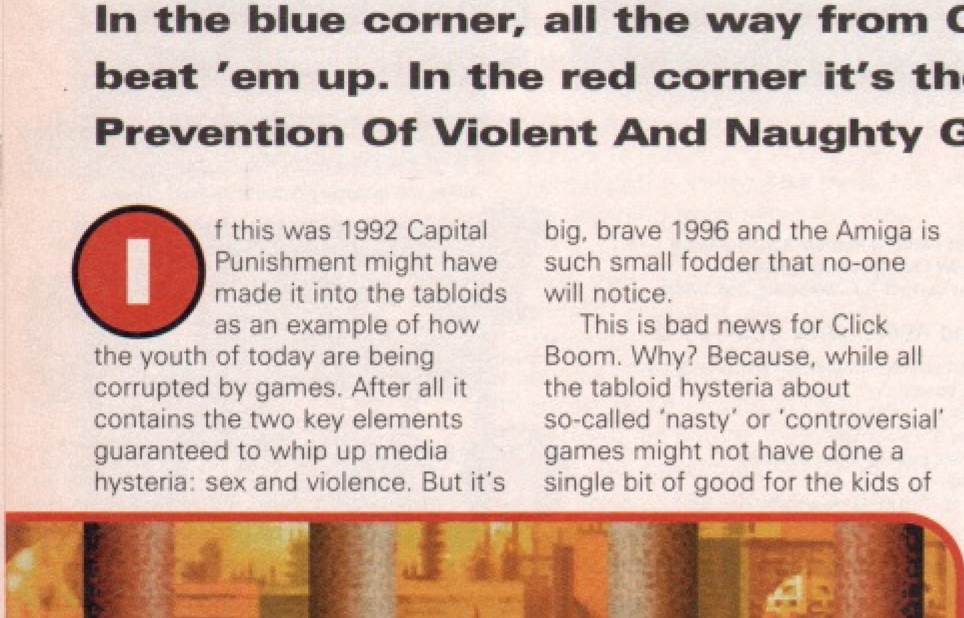
Capital Punishment

■ **Price: £25.00** ■ **Publisher: Click Boom/Various** ✆ **clkboom@io.org**

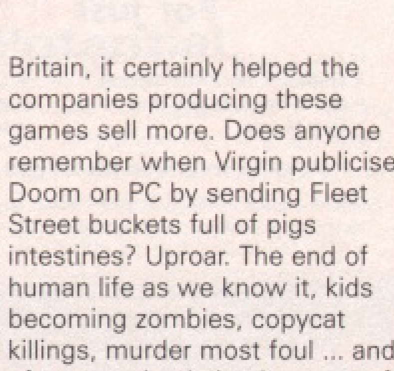
In the blue corner, all the way from Canada, it's a fast beat 'em up. In the red corner it's the Society For The Prevention Of Violent And Naughty Games ...

If this was 1992 Capital Punishment might have made it into the tabloids as an example of how the youth of today are being corrupted by games. After all it contains the two key elements guaranteed to whip up media hysteria: sex and violence. But it's big, brave 1996 and the Amiga is such small fodder that no-one will notice.

This is bad news for Click Boom. Why? Because, while all the tabloid hysteria about so-called 'nasty' or 'controversial' games might not have done a single bit of good for the kids of Britain, it certainly helped the companies producing these games sell more. Does anyone remember when Virgin publicised Doom on PC by sending Fleet Street buckets full of pigs intestines? Uproar. The end of human life as we know it, kids becoming zombies, copycat killings, murder most foul ... and of course circulation increases for outrageous newspapers plus top class publicity and phenomenal sales success for Virgin. But poor Click Boom, even with more blood than any other Amiga beat 'em up ever and a gravity defying, semi naked, fetishistic ninja lady, Capital Punishment will probably not get mentioned outside of the Amiga press. Ho hum.



▲ Demona's razor sharp shoe cracks Corben Wedge's razor sharp jaw. Animation is superb.



▲ The custom options screen allows you to tailor the game to your playing needs and preferences.

Censorship

The story goes that Petro Tyschtschenko of Amiga Technologies told Click Boom that they would have to do a version without nudity but with loads of blood for Britain and a version with much more nudity and no blood for Germany if they wanted the game to sell. Instead they've neutered it (like my neighbour's randy dog) for the protection of society. The sex



and violence has a censorship option in all countries. If you have children who really shouldn't be seeing the sort of things you take for granted in the Sun and the News Of The World every day of the week, you can password the game so that Demona (the aforementioned ninja) wears a bra, and blood doesn't drip from spiked characters in the slightly nauseous manner it does in the unrestricted version.

But the fighting action remains the same regardless. And since this is the most important part of a beat 'em up, you'll be glad to know that they've got rid of some of the woodenness I criticised it for in the past and have even implemented some neat special moves to spice up the action.

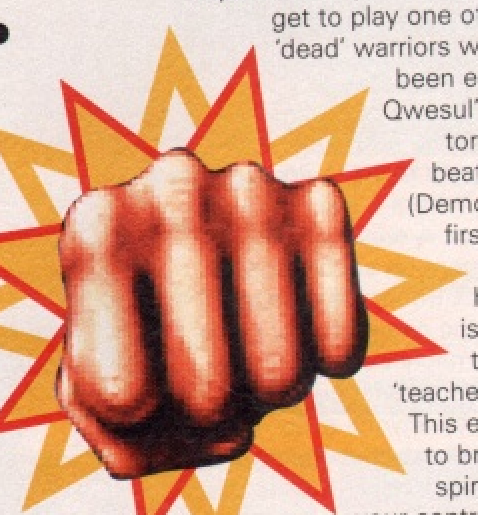


▲ Wakantanka wrestles an alien to the ground. This background is a hidden special on one of the levels.



▲ Throwing a character onto this electric trap will sap them of even more energy.

Getting to the top



Capital Punishment is furnished with a typically outlandish storyline, although the construction of the plot isn't there just for decoration. It does, untypically, have some relevance to the way the game is played. Basically there are four warriors – all of whom are dead. And there is a nasty old demon-sorcerer called Qwesul who has made the world a dark, evil place for all and sundry. The Gods are not happy with this (whoa! Religion! Tabloid journalists take note: this game is advocating paganism too. Shock horror!), so they've brought one of the four warriors back from the dead to try to kill off Qwesul and restore peace and order to the world.

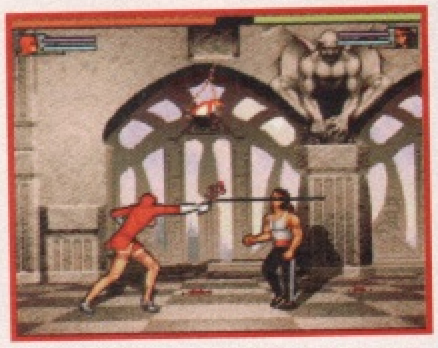
In the Epic, the main storyline Vs computer game, you choose from the four warriors: Corben Wedge, a bandaged, boxer shorts sporting pugilist; Sarmon, a kick boxing expert; Demona, the busty whip equipped combat vixen and Wakantanka, a bemuscled Native American navvy. Coming back from the dead as your fave character you first engage one of Qwesul's alien stooges (where aliens fit into the story isn't really explained). If you beat it, you will get to play one of the other 'dead' warriors who have been enslaved as Qwesul's protectors. If you beat her (Demona is the first) you get to re-fight her in what is known as the 'teacher' level. This enables you to bring her spirit under your control – if you can overcome Demona a second time of course.

Once you have the little so and so under your control you can use her to further your quest. By beating Demona you may choose her instead of your first character to continue. If one of your two characters gets bumped off you still have the other. As the game progresses you can collect all four characters, though chances are you'll lose them all plenty of times before you complete the game. This idea, which is essential to the plot of the game, replaces the 'lives' common in most other beat 'em ups.

Moves afoot

The contestants each have a particular style of fighting and movement and some will be easier to come to grips with right from the start. The two easiest to master are Wakantanka and Demona. Wakantanka is like a tank: big, unwieldy but very strong. His hits take much more power from an opponent than any other character and he is damaged less. The disadvantage is that he's a weighty chappie and as such is much slower than any of the others: so if you are fighting sprightly Johnnie Sarmon you can lose quickly. Demona is rather weak, but much faster and so more difficult to hit. Her advantage for beginners is that she has a long range weapon – her whip. This can be used to punish offenders or even drag them closer for a piece of sharp-pointed shoe-in-crotch action. Painful.

The other two are more along the lines of your average Ken and Ryu – talented all rounders with Corben Wedge being the stronger of the two, while Sarmon is marginally faster. You can control the characters by keyboard, single



▲ Although light and vulnerable, Demon has a long range weapon: her whip.



▲ Demona is not adverse to using her knees either.



Characters



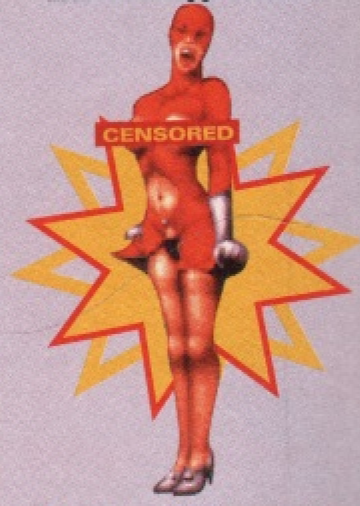
▲ Wakantanka - stronger than Arnie but only an apprentice at trimming goatee beards.



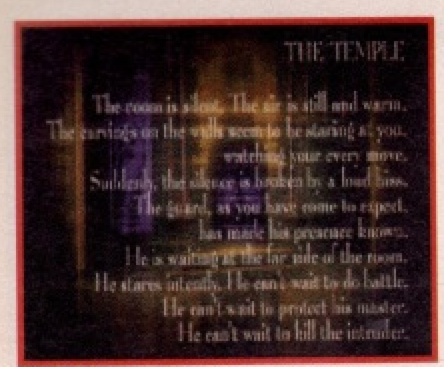
▲ Bandaged, bulging and brazen, Corben Wedge is fast, powerful and has big calves.



▲ Sarmon is a whizz at kick boxing and a master at trimming goatee beards.



▲ Fear and a G-String. Demona will no doubt appeal to the pervy games player.



▲ Each level has spooky music and a nice text introduction to get you in the mood.

button joystick or multi button joypad. The type of moves vary between each, with Wakantanka concentrating on punches and headbutts while Demona makes use of her whip.

Both Demona and Sarmon flip backwards in the style of Michelle Pfieffer's Catwoman which highlights the games superb animations. When I saw the first demo for our preview early this year I didn't like Corben Wedge's ancestor – he was too wooden. This has been rectified and these characters now look straight from an arcade machine. The most wooden one left is Wakantanka, but he's intended to be slow, and this probably justifies why.

In terms of graphics the superb lighting effects and backgrounds of the original demo have been retained and enhanced. Some of these are stunning, the best the Amiga has ever seen, but unfortunately Click Boom have chosen to be a little too different on some levels which are notably too dark or are deliberately foggy. They claim that these effects enhance the game and make it different from any other – a valid point of view – but I just found them a bit of a let down after the other levels.



Options

The type of game you play is governed by the multiple options available. The original idea of Capital Punishment was to have no limits – the fighters could pass without having to jump over each other, the hit areas around each fighter were very narrow which meant that you had to be very accurate (over accurate as far as I'm concerned) to hit the opposition and your players could disappear off screen willy nilly. I didn't like these features, and nor did some others, so Click Boom obliged by providing options to enable you to have a more 'conventional' game by reversing all of the above actions in a custom menu. Conventional maybe, but in my mind playable. It's this that has raised capital Punishment beyond my previous expectations. By tailoring the options (and the difficulty level – training is 'easy' and normal is 'difficult') you can even make Capital Punishment suit your style of play and it becomes very enjoyable.

Competitions can have up to four players and while playing the game with a couple of hints from Alex Petrovic, the game's producer, I discovered hidden special moves which the computer, especially on normal difficulty, finds no bother using, but which human players will have to practice. These moves are not mentioned in the manual, so it's an added challenge to find and use them. There are also a few hidden cheats which will spice the game up no end.

Sounds good

If you have last month's CD-ROM you'll appreciate the sound effects in Capital Punishment. The game



▲ The dark Teacher level is where you get a chance to recapture other characters' souls.

is playable from hard drive only and for a good reason: although it comes on 7 disks it's actually over 15Mb in size. A reasonable chunk of this is spent on sound, and it shows. Click Boom are reluctant to release the name of their musician, presumably because if they did he would be snapped up at a high salary by anyone even remotely interested in adding top music and sfx to their games. It's that good.

I tried the game out with the Aura Interactor reviewed on page 43. This amplifies the bass frequencies of the sound effects and gives you a feeling of being hit. The SFX setup on CP means that the left hand player's sound effects go through the left channel and vice versa, so using a channel switching function on the Aura you could filter out the other player's SFX and only get 'hurt' when your own player is hit. This really is a nice feature and it was one of the better games I tried with the Aura Interactor.

I played Mortal Kombat II again while reviewing CP and it's amazing the difference between the two. Graphics-wise the sheer Amiga-ness of Capital Punishment comes out on top. It's an original game with stunning lighting effects and amazing animation speed that also plays well. But there was still something about the older looking (and obviously converted) MKII which drew me into the atmosphere more. Somehow it's more like a coin-op, CP is like a computer game. Nonetheless Click Boom have created a damn fine beat 'em up which breaks away from the



established mould and shows that a stunning looking and playable Amiga beat 'em up needn't be a port from another platform. It's also worth noting (as you 'll see from the score box) that it has the best sound effects and music in the history of beat 'em ups. Now, how do we attract the tabloids' attention?■

Alan Dykes

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

- workbench version.........3+
- number of disks 7
- RAM ....2Mb min HD only!
- hard disk installable ......HD only!

A600 A1200 A1500 A2000 A3000 A4000

graphics	91%
sound	96%
lastability	91%
playability	89%

OVERALL
Speed, speed – eat your heart out Super Streetfighter 2
91%

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Kick off '96

■ **Price: £25.99** ■ **Publisher: Anco** ✆ **01322 292 513**

Although much maligned in its last incarnation, will this year's version spark the imagination once again?



▲ Anco have returned to the more pleasing overhead 2D view for this version of Kick Off.

Anco invented the playable overhead footie game before Sensible even got up for breakfast and proved that the formula would work. Of course once Sensi got hold of the idea they produced an all time classic game, the best of the genre, but let's not forget who started it all.

Kick Off 1 and 2 were games some journalists loved to hate. It must also be noted that the buying public had no such hang up: they went out and bought them in droves. The journalistic snobbishness surrounding them was based on a 'Sensible rules, everything else is rubbish' philosophy which also saw the more than reasonable Football Glory get a thrashing in some magazines. But these were fine games for their day. However, when Kick Off 3 was released in late 1994 there was genuine cause for complaint. What happened to the overhead view they invented? What in heaven's name were all these matchstick men wobbling around the field for (KO3 was not an impressively fast game) ... and playing side to side if you don't mind?

So it was with some trepidation that I loaded up Kick Off '96. Having checked out Sensible World Of Soccer European Champions some months ago I was left with a slightly bitter taste in my mouth. That offering was a statistical upgrade without major game enhancements – a marketing exercise in effect. My inclination was that Anco were likely to follow suit.

But no, fair play to Steve Screech and the Dartford crew. They obviously took the criticism of number three to heart and have gone back, if not to basics, to a concept likely to create a better game. For a start they've lost that horrible side view – and the isometric one that caused so much controversy in the Kick Off engine that was included in Player Manager 2. This time they've gone for overhead 2D again with added spice in the form of a '3D' viewing option which basically lowers the camera perspective to around 70 degrees, makes the players bigger and giving the goals a 'realistic' look.

Competition

The whole reason for KO96 is, or was, of course the European Championships. For which it's a bit late. But nevertheless the opportunity has not been lost to



▲ They've outdone Sensi statistically as far as international teams are concerned.

set his aggression levels at a hooliganistic 66, they are surely taking a risk; he has their address.

You can set up any size and mixed manner of league you like, including the creation of a dream team. Imagine Shearer, Klinsman, Cantona and Gavin Dykes on the same team! World beating and no mistake. Dream teams are nothing new, you get a similar feature with Sensi, but for the mad statisticians among you, KO96 does give you more detail, with players rated according to Pace, Vision, Flair, Agility, Retention, Passing, Shooting, Tackling and Heading.

include as many foreign teams and players as possible (as well as a reasonable number of top domestic teams). Believe it or not they've outdone Sensi on the international stats front, although the menus (still mouse driven) are more awkward to navigate. A good test of just how far a game has gone with footie stats is to search through the Republic of Ireland league for the little known (outside the emerald isle anyway) Sligo Rovers, which a cousin of mine has captained and played in defence for. If he's in there, it's pretty comprehensive ... and he is, though I'll wager he would have a lot to say to Anco for marking his Vision statistic as 34 (out of 100). Since they've also

Two halves

There are problems though and the first strikes you right from the beginning. Why must we still live in the dark ages as far as loading games is concerned? There are three disks here, and number two and three need to be switched regularly ... but the game only recognises one disk drive. Add to that the frustration of seeing the enclosed PC manual's hard disk installation instructions and you get the picture.

Another pretty basic complaint is that, having played Sensi (and I'm sorry Anco, but who hasn't) I'm pretty used to seeing the name of the player with the ball on screen. This not only provides more commentary about what is going on, but is a useful tool for examining players' skills throughout the season. KO96 tells you the number of the player with the ball, but not the name and this makes no impact whatsoever. Also, believe it or not, it doesn't even tell you which team is which, or which team has scored. And in some cases the players' kit isn't right so it can't give you a clue either.

Although the speed of the game is now impressive enough, and playability has increased as a result, the animations are still extremely matchstick-like, especially in 3D mode. Here it looks as though a couple of frames have been left out to increase speed – which is probably the case.

Nevertheless KO96 is definitely head and shoulders above its predecessor. It's simply more enjoyable and although it doesn't even challenge SWOS in the overall playability stakes, if you're looking for a game with a bit more depth that the latter you should give it a chance. On name alone many probably will. ■

Alan Dykes



▲ This confrontation could be the beginnings of an international incident, who knows?

KICK OFF '96

A500 | A500+ | A600 | A1200 | A1500 | A2000 | A3000 | A4000

- workbench version.........1.3+
- number of disks.............3
- RAM..................................1Mb
- hard disk installable......No

graphics	84%
sound	60%
lastability	79%
playability	78%

OVERALL
Miles ahead of its predecessor. Good kickabout.
79%

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8364 Paula A500/A500+	£12.00	Gayle A600/A1200	£25.00
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Kickstart ROM 2.04	£22.00	Mouse (290dpi)	£15.00
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6570 Keyboard Chip	£20.00	10 Boxed Branded Disks	£6.00
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Access VISA

Aura Interactor

■ Price: £69.99 ■ Developer: Aura © 0171 331 5300

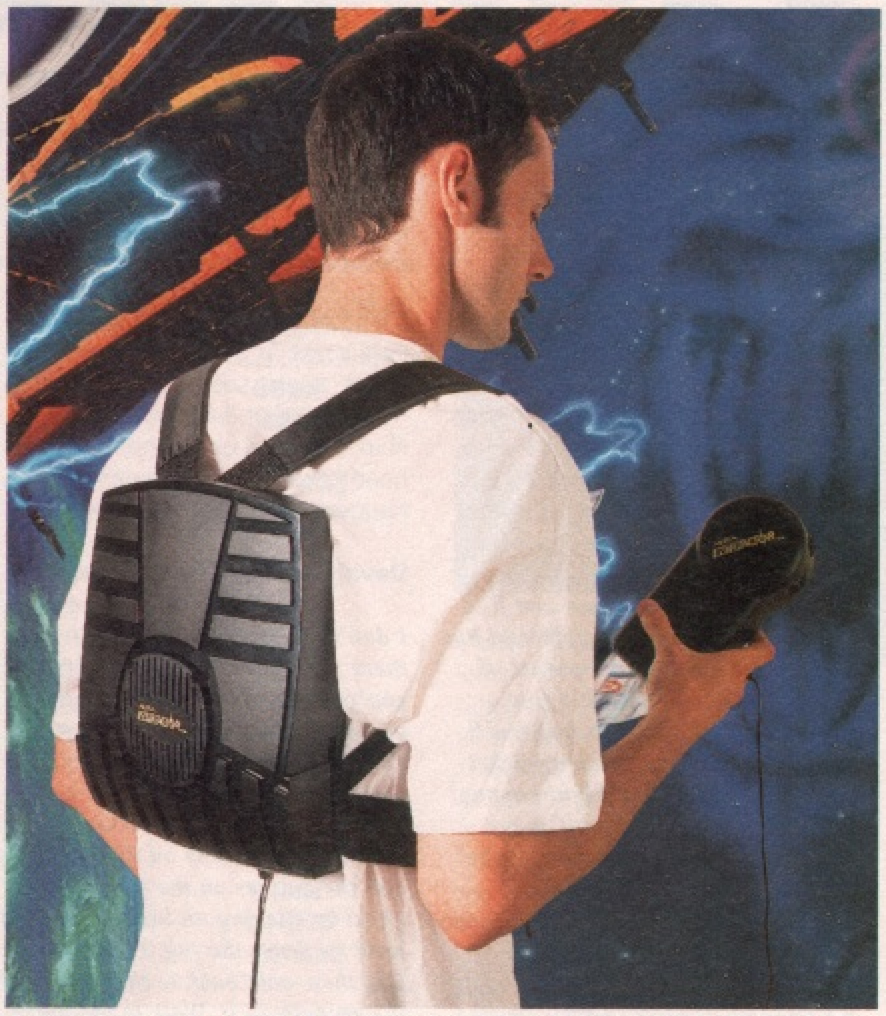
A step closer to virtual gaming or too much like standing next to a loudspeaker? The Amiga's first ever interactive backpack is here.

My only previous experience of back vibration has been after wearing an overweight rucksack for too long – that shaky sensation you get when you take the thing off and it feels as though gravity has deserted you and three dozen Lemmings are crawling around your back. Well add a woodpecker to the equation, tapping away on your spine, and you've got some idea of what the Aura is all about.

And why would you want to do this to yourself? All in the name of games. Basically the Aura is intended to add an extra dimension to games playing – that of feeling as well as sight and sound. The whole idea is to amplify the bass frequencies of the music and sound effects of a game, transferring these to your body via a vibrating panel so that shooting a gun or being hit by a bullet etc becomes a more realistic experience.

Space story

According to Aura's PR people it is a by-product of Ronnie Reagan's pet project Star Wars technology. Apparently a lot of research went into finding ways of reducing vibrations on satellites being launched with sensitive equipment on board. Some bright boffin espoused the theory that the best way to counter vibrations is to recreate them electronically in an amplifier and 'flatten out' the offending vibration with its mirror image (or something like that). I have checked this out with a physics graduate who confirms the idea's validity, but feel free to enlighten me further if you must.



▲ Shake, rattle and roll. Spine tingling sensations courtesy of the Aura Interactor. What will they think of next?

Bush and Clinton, Big Ron's successors have put Star Wars on the back burner and so Aura's makers have been probing other markets for their vibrators. And I'm not trying to be funny.

Their interactive SFX packs come in two forms, the Aura backpack reviewed here and a more expensive 'cushion' which vibrates your, er, bum. At £100 odd, the latter is out of the range most people would be willing to pay for having their games enhanced and their bums massaged, but at £69.00 this version might just be be in the range of those with cash to spare and a back that needs tingling.

The Aura consists of two separate components, the amplifier and the backpack – which is really just a glorified speaker. The Amplifier has two controls, power and filter. Power adjusts the amount of strength the vibration has (how much of a wallop it gives you) and filter mixes sounds in and out, with a high filter giving you the extreme bass end only, and a low filter giving you much more of the other sounds. It also has a channel switch which allows you to choose which side you're on in, for instance, a beat 'em up, (see Capital Punishment review).

You connect the amplifier to your Amiga via its stereo outputs using a cable with two male and two female audio plugs/sockets at one end and a stereo 3.5mm jack at the other end. The audio plugs connect up to your Amiga, you connect your normal sound lead to the cable's female sockets and then plug the jack at the other end into the requisite socket on the Aura Interactor's side.

Next, place the backpack on your back, adjust the harness and clip on the safety belt. Finally plug your new limb into the amplifier and you're wired for feeling.

I loaded up several games to test the Aura: The Killing Grounds, Gloom Deluxe, XTreme Racing, Worms and Capital Punishment. The moody atmosphere of The Killing Grounds seemed just right for the test, but with the lack of proper bass effects and grunting it didn't convey the hits as well as I thought it would. In contrast Gloom worked well, in fact it pounded my back in a similar way to Doom's performance when I first tried the Aura on a Playstation. XTreme Racing was manic because of its jungle backtrack, but it didn't give a real feeling of driving until the music was turned off and you just left it to the revs to tell their story to your spinal chord. The best performance came from Worms. There is a catch though: we replaced the original sample set in Worms with a bass and explosives-heavy one – without this customisation it would never have had any impact.

Mixed feelings

If software was developed with Aura specifically in mind it would be much more impressive than it is. But there isn't. At the moment it is little more than a novelty, and an expensive one at that. While playing Gloom in a dark room it's quite effective (if a tad false), getting a decent stereo and putting it behind you is almost as sinister. The idea is great and I'd love to use it with some dedicated games, but you'd have to be dead keen to spend cash for it at this stage. ■

Alan Dykes

AURA INTERACTOR

A500 / A500+ / A600 / A1200 / A1500 / A2000 / A3000 / A4000

system requirements: Will work with any Amiga

ease of use.....93% Couldn't be simpler to use. Just plug it in and go.

performance.....70% Can make you feel like you're sitting with your back to a night club's bass bin – but games performance is limited.

value for money.....75% Would be much better if software was designed specifically to use this device

OVERALL A novelty item until further notice. **70%**



Adventure Helpline

Snakes, lottery tickets and and goblins, what more could a girl want? Well, more challenging questions for a start. Come on guys!

Heart of China

Please help me? I am stuck in the Heart of China. I've found Kate and the two snakes that are keeping her a prisoner and I've used the chicken on the snakes, but still no luck. What should I do?

John Sadler, no address given.

Well it looks like you wasted your chicken because these snakes are real nasty. There is no way they are going to be sweet-talked out of their prisoner. You should have given the chicken to the dog and then given him the wine to make him drop down dead.

Don't tell Kate, but there is no way she is getting out of here without a bit of pain and suffering. Still, I can't think of any occasion when a man didn't bring me pain and suffering, so I don't expect she'll be too surprised.

First bolt the door to give yourself some extra time, then take control of Lucky and shoot a snake. Sadly, one of the snakes will bite Kate and poison her no matter what you do. Grab Kate and go to the balcony. Use the curtain rope to swing out of the window and make your escape.

Leisure Suit Larry II

Please help me? I have been stuck on this game for two months and I'm too embarrassed to ask my friends for help as I'm sure the answer is probably really easy. I cannot figure out how to get some money for a hair cut, a soda, or a lottery ticket.

Patrick Slopes, Barnham.

The eternal question; how to make money? Well, I've never had a problem, but then when you've lived for 400 years you tend to become a dab hand filling your pockets. Speaking of which, have you looked in your jeans? I suggest you pop into the garage next to your house and find the clothes which your girlfriend has thrown out. Look in the pocket of your jeans and you should find a dollar bill. With a dollar bill you'll have enough to buy a lottery ticket and who knows what might happen? Well actually I know, but I'm not going to tell you. I'll let you do the next bit all by yourself.

Elvira – Mistress of the Dark

How do I get the crown out of the secret room beneath the altar? And what do I do in the moat?

T. Caffrey, Norwich.

You do realise that Elvira's hair is a wig don't you? And she is much older than she looks in the photographs. In fact she's had her face lifted so many times, there's nothing left in her shoes!

When you enter the chapel you must take the prayer book and insert Elvira's ring into the cross. Enter the chamber under the altar and get the crown. What do you do in the moat? Well I know what most boys do and it makes me shudder.

Moat's are also very good for drowning in but if you want to do something a little more useful, here's what I suggest. First swim until you reach the bottom of the well, then go up for air. Go down again, then forward to the grill. Use the iron key to unlock it and enter the moat. Go forward one move, then turn left. Move forward fourteen squares then get the key from the Grey Knight. Now go back the way you came.

Monkey Island

I am stuck in part three of the game. I can't seem to get the hatch open on LeChuck's Ghost ship. I've tried using the monkey head key but nothing seems to happen. What do I do?

David Haworth, Crowthorne.

I don't understand your problem as there should be no difficulty if you're doing it right. When you get on board, use the compass in LeChuck's cabin to get the key. Go back on deck, then down the hatch to the Livestock quarters. Get the feather. Use the key on the hatch. Use the feather on the sleeping ghost by clicking on his feet. Repeat until he drops the jug. Pick up the jug, then walk back to the room with the animals in it. Walk to the hatch and use the grog with the dish. The rats will drink the grog and die.

Gobliins II

I am stuck on Level three. I have the false teeth, mayonnaise, elixir and the stool. I have given the imprint to the blacksmith, found the door on the big green monster, opened it and made the monster's mouth move. But how do I get the metal from Gromelin? Operate the bellows? Open the well cover?

Mark Staton, Chesterfield.

Normally I hate goblins – nasty little things that get drunk and chase fairies but this pair make me laugh. Put the mayonnaise to the right of Gromelon. Put Fingus on the shelf above and then make him jump onto the mayonnaise. While Gromelon is covered in gunge, Winkle can grab the sword. Get Winkle to use the stool on Oto to get him angry. Move Fingus next to him and grab hold of the lance as it swings past. Fingus will now be moved left and thrown onto the bellows. The key which the blacksmith makes opens the cupboard which contains two diving suits that are needed to enter the well.

Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade

I've managed to get into the castle and find Henry but I can't seem to rescue him. The guards always fight me and I can't win because I don't have much energy left. Also could you please send me a complete list of all the adventure games that you can get for the Amiga and where I can get them from?

Sara Stones, Milton Keynes.

Did it ever occur to you that you are supposed to get caught? I mean, the game doesn't stop does it? Correct me if I'm wrong (go on, I dare you!) but you now get tied to a chair in the Library, don't you? You simply have to move this chair next to the suit of armour on the right. Then kick the armour to make the axe fall and cut the rope and you're free.

As for your second brainwave. It would take me until next year to sit down and compile a list of available games, there are too many and I might break a nail. You wouldn't want that now, would you? ■

If you've got a little problem with your favourite Role Playing Game and would like Vamp to help you out, drop her a line at CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



FINAL THOUGHT: IT TAKES A LOT OF EXPERIENCE FOR A GIRL LIKE ME TO KISS LIKE A BEGINNER.

Snip tips



by Matt Broughton, Games Consultant.

Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to cheat we go! Yep, it's time again to let Matt Broughton spoil all your fun. Keep them tips coming folks, there's gold in them there hills!

PREMIER MANAGER 3 DELUXE
Gremlin

Snip Tips wouldn't be Snip Tips without the odd Premier Manager mention, so try typing in **416074** on the phone for a pleasant surprise (you know, the sort of surprise that gives you £3,360,000. Doh! There goes the surprise!) Thanks to Darren Noyce for that one.

DUNGEON MASTER 2
SSI

Mike Taylor of Middlesex has a few spell formulas to help out any would-be adventurers. Here we go ...

EE OH VEN = Poison Gas
UM FUL = Light
UM FUL IR = Fireball
LO ZO = Open Door
And a few spells...
UM VI = Healing (blue)
UM VI BRO = Cure Poison Spell.

DETROIT
Impressions

Norway's very own Terje Karlsen has a few tips for the car sim from hell. Fire all the technicians (if there are any) and then set their wage up to $50,000 and wait for several rounds. There will be tons of people wanting to work for that fee, so when there are a few thousand available, hire all you need then set their wage at one dollar. They'll work at that wage for a long as there are people available, and when they do run out just repeat the procedure. If only the Tories had caught on to this one!

TOP GEAR 2
Gremlin

Ta very much to Mr K Peace (we'll call him 'Keep The' for now) who sent in these handy codes for the old Gremlin race extravaganza. Here are the first four locations, we'll print the rest next issue!

BRITAIN	GERMANY
6GF6	65L#
8VCL	]6MT
W4N8	5JLY
6N61V	#CV%[
NJH77	854JJ

CANADA	GREECE
NQL#	%YF6
]8D[	8GG[
RF3C	NQ2B
5V[NJ	BT#+#
+[#RR	RNM##

EGYPT	INDIA
W52H	$2D5
LHM2	73LM
3JN6	GINA
PFY+[	2H2TP
3YWCC	HDC33

FRANCE	IRELAND
$85M	J4H8
PY6L	#YY3
BGW]	]P6F
JT#QL	7Y$QM
GCB22	B$]VV

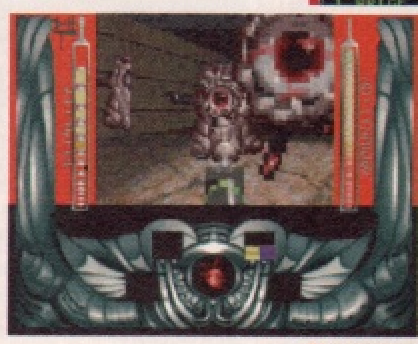
THE PATRICIAN
Ascon

Terje Karlsen also sent in a nice little tip for this historical adventure-thingie. When you auction off a ship, bid for it yourself and go as high as about 100,000, then wait for the computer to bid. If nobody bids before the second "Going" bid once more and wait. Keep this up (ie bidding every time it gets to the second "Going") and eventually the computer will bid, and you'll sell your ship for enormous profit!

ALIEN BREED 3D
TEAM 17

A quick cheat to give you more ammo at the beginning of each level, courtesy of Paul Buxton of Derby. The first eight letters of the code deal with the level, your health and your weapons, while the second eight deal with ammunition. Simply alter the password, leaving the first eight letters, but changing all the others to **'M'**. You'll find much more gear around the place for you to use and enjoy!

EG:
LEVEL 6 PASSWORD -
POKKNMPLJGNNLPOF
Now becomes -
POKKNMPLMMMMMMMM





▲ (Left) Alien Breed 3D: fancy some extra weapons? (Right) Get wedges of extra cash in Premier Manager 3 with this month's cheat.

WORMS (A600)
Ocean

Alex Jones from Blackburn Lancs has a nice little code which, when entered, gives your worms an energy level of 150 to start with. Just enter **'400000285'**.

GALAGA V2.51
Public Domain

Mr Andrew Pullen of Chinnor has a handy points bonus tip for the excellent shoot 'em up, Galaga. When in the Meteor bonus stage, keep the fire button held down from the start to the finish to receive a 5000 credit bonus instead of 1000 (you do, of course, still have to finish the bonus stage!)

Also, when you have four lives, buy more to increase your ship's armour and save you money. Four hundred credits rather than six hundred, see? Nice one Andrew!

SLAMTILT
21 Century

Andrew Bolt from Bury in Lancashire has caught the Slamtilt craze which swept this office a couple of months ago. Not content with three balls though he has sent us the code for a 5 ball cheat mode. All you have to do is type **LONGPLAY** on any table at the start while it's scrolling and a message confirming the cheat should appear. Also, try typing in the following for hidden messages:

BARRY
CHEAT
COW
DANIEL
IAIN
KLAUS
WHIPLASH

Cheers Andy, and keep playing Slamtilt – it's brill.

And that's it!
A sad moment I know, but we'll be back again in a month's time to ruin even more of your favourite games! Keep your tips coming in, and don't forget that there's a free Hit Squad game for each tips printed (if Ocean get round to it, obviously!) Be seeing you ...

EPIC MARKETING
CD ROM SOFTWARE



The new Gif Sensation double CD gontains around 10,000 full colour images, Viewer and converters are included on the CD. Subjects include: Vehicles, Space, Science fiction, Textures, Landscapes, Sunsets, Money, Cartoons, Fantasy, Sports, Raytraced, Classic art. and loads more.

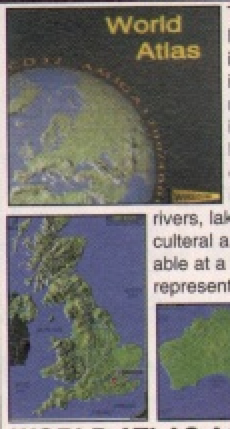
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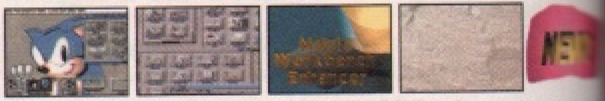


This superb highly rated Amiga CD-ROM World atlas features a flexible interface allowing quick access to individual countries via continental maps, county list, capital or general index. Concise, informative county histories. Each country is supported by a series of maps depicting regional position, major cities, rivers, lakes and mountains. Background culteral and economic information is available at a glance. Basic national facts are represented graphically and comparative to the UK. For A1200,A4000, & CD32.

WORLD ATLAS AGA NEW !!! (CD220) £29.99

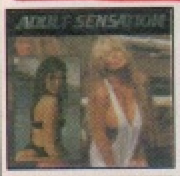


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MAGIC WORKBENCH ENHANCER v2 (CD187 £17.

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Adult Sensation is possibly the Amiga's largest selling adult title. It features over **4,000** high quality 256 colour images of the "adult" nature. Image viewers and coverters are included for every configuration of Amiga. (OVER 18 ONLY) out now! (CD01) £19.99



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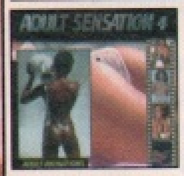
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Available now, this CD contains around **2,000** especially chosen high quality GIF Images. Viewers & graphic converters are included for easy and quick access to any of the pictures on any Amiga. (OVER 18 ONLY) OUT NOW! (CD169) £19.99



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Available Soon this CD actually contains hundreds of naughty? animations/film clips for Adults only. Viewing software included for Amiga. Limited first stocks so order now for immediate despatch upon release. (OVER 18) (CD146x) £29.99



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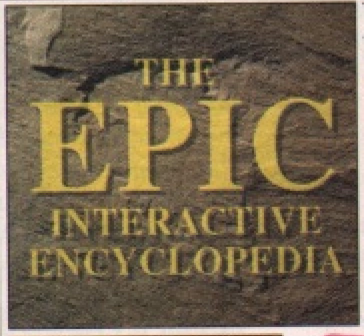
This amazing new CD contains everything you need to connect to the Internet. It features all of the programs you need to get connected. It also includes the best of the net, so you can try before you buy! We've also included one months national free internet access so all you should pay is the local phone bill (1p a min*.) Includes special offers on internet software and hardware, and details on how to set up your own web and ftp sites etc. Absolutely no knowledge of the Internet or Shell required you simply slot in the CD, click the mouse a few times on the relevent icons and you're connected! There's even a complete database of hundreds of the very best web sites to visit. Excellent!

INCLUDES ONE MONTHS FREE INTERNET ACCESS*

***This Amiga CD contains everything you need,**
***It's easy to setup and use,**
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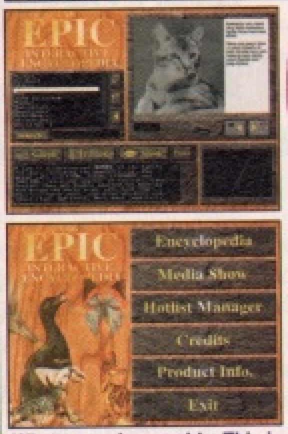


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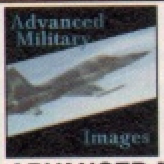
This brand new updated CD contains the very latest AGA ities, demos, Images and games. All accessable direc from the CD. The makers cl there are virtualy no duplica files from the first CD.

AGA EXPERIENCE 2 (CD210) £19.



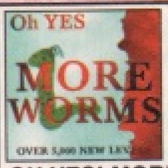
Zoom 2 includes the very latest software upto April'96, It includes the very latest games, demos and utilities. It also includes over 100 new klondike cards, The complete Active Pro pack, over 50 disks of samples, 25mb of Magic Workbench and a special "programmers" section.

ZOOM 2 (CD211 £19.99)



This data CD ROM includes hundreds of high quality Advanced Military images, including hundreds of different aircraft and helicopters. great for just browing or desktop video/publishing.

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This CD includes over 5,000 brand new levels and maps for the game "Worms" aswell as game patches to update and enhance the features of the original game, If you love Worms, you'll love this.

OH YES! MORE WORMS (CD201 £9.99)



This most comprehensive co tion of Lightwave and Imagi 3D objects ever compiled o CD. It also contains hundre texture files, and example images. All files are usable from CD.

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Tech Scene



It's all gone a bit speedy this month, with turbo nutter accelerators leading the pack, closely followed by a couple of impressive Mac emulators.



Dynamode Modems 56

50 Miami TCP/Termite TCP

Internet users get a choice of two new TCP/IP stacks. We put them in head to head competition and bring you the verdict.

53 Cyberstorm II 060

Give your Amiga the power of the ultimate 680x0 series CPU with the latest revision of phase 5's cover-featured accelerator.

54 Apollo 1240 & 1260

There's no need for A1200 users to miss out on the quest for speed now that the Apollo 040 and 060 cards have touched down.

56 Dynamode Modems

Looking for a cheap modem for your Amiga? These two come complete with a pack of useful software to get you started.

58 Emplant 1200/Mac Lite

Running an Apple Macintosh system on your A1200 is made even quicker and easier with these new emulators.

60 Photo CD Manager

Conduct digital TV slideshows from your Amiga. Just the thing for those holiday snaps?

64 CD-ROM Scene

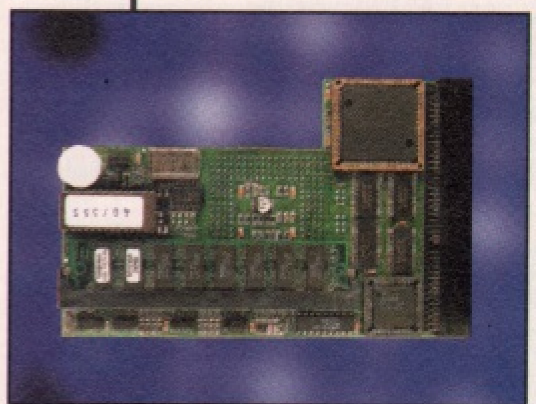
The Epic Encyclopedia headlines this month's CD section, alongside themed collections of games and demos, and Aminet 13 too.

67 PD Scene

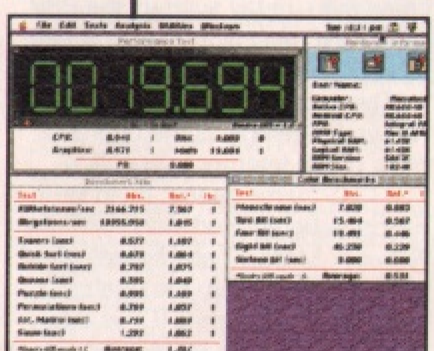
Cutesy platform games and a sci-fi spotter's quiz feature are on the bill this month.

71 PD Utilities

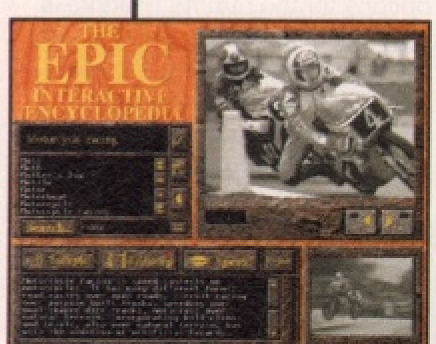
A wide variety of tools are scrutinised and guess what they're all absolutely free!



Apollo 1240 & 1260 54



Emplant 1200/ Mac Lite 58



CD-ROM Scene 67

Termite TCP Vs

Two new Internet packages arrive. Just how well do they TCP/IP stack up against each other? We find out.

The Amiga has been a brilliant Internet machine for a long time now with AmiTCP getting thousands of Amiga users on the Internet. However, there's no doubt many were disillusioned by the difficulty of a highly complicated package. Just as it happened with the PC, easy-to-use software has finally arrived on the Amiga too. As usual, it never rains but it pours so two new Internet software packages appeared this month. Holger Kruse's shareware Miami and the commercial TermiteTCP from HiSoft.

Termite TCP

■ Price: £59.95 ■ Developer: Oregon Research ■ Supplier: HiSoft ✆ 01525 718181 E-Mail: sales@hisoft.co.uk WWW: http://www.hisoft.co.uk

TermiteTCP is what's known as a 'TCP/IP stack' – that bit of software which gets your Amiga talking the language of the Internet. Once running and dialled up to an internet provider, other Internet 'clients' (World Wide Web browser, Email clients Telnet and FTP etc) can link to it to get onto the Internet.

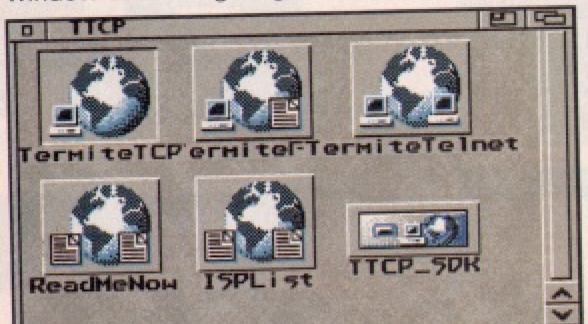
TermiteTCP is on one disk and comes with a printed manual. The greater bulk of which is 'Reggies Guide to the Internet' which will be very useful to first time netters and is a superb guide about the various terms, methods and programs used. It also has a mini web directory at the back which is handy.

Inconspicuous

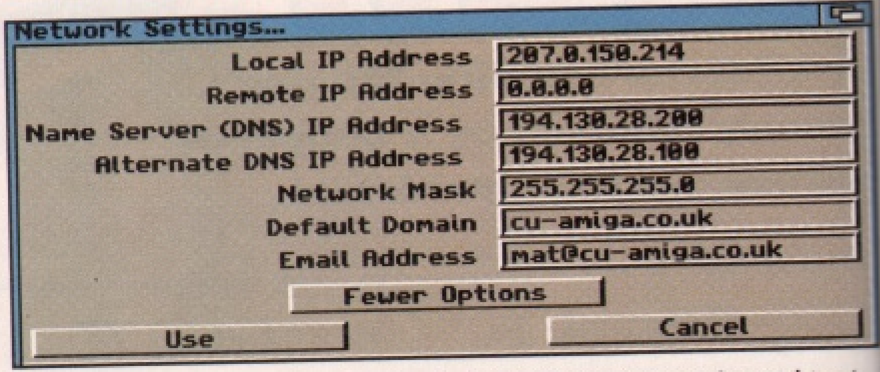
Installation is via the standard Installer. You click on Termite to run bringing up a small inconspicuous window and a single right-mouse button menu controls configuration options. Activating the Connection settings makes a GUI appear where you must enter the modem's details such as the serial rate and such forth. There's two modes to this, a simple and a complex mode. The simple mode is the default one but you can enter more detail such as the PPP PAP/CHAP password which is necessary for some Internet providers.

The second settings menu, Network Settings, is the nuts and bolts of the Internet connection. The DNS 'name server' IP address needs to be entered along with the Network Mask. These figures need to be obtained from the Internet provider since TermiteTCP is incapable of detecting them itself. The users domain and Email addresses also need entering. Again this has a complex mode which hides the options for the remote IP address which should be negotiated during the connection anyway. Providing one knows the correct values to insert, configuration takes seconds.

TermiteTCP has a built-in dialler – the section which calls up the Internet provider and negotiates through the tiny BBS-like interface Internet providers use to identify the caller and obtain a password. An adequate teach system which requires the user to type in details as it calls up. It will remember and perform these actions automatically in future use.



▲ The contents of the TermiteTCP disk; Termite, TermiteFTP and TermiteTelnet.



▲ This is the limit of Termite's configuration options. You'll have to find out these values from your Internet service provider before the package will get you on the Internet.



▲ Here's TermiteFTP which is extremely basic so the user would be well advised to get a better FTP client.

However, the password is seen by anyone opening up the Edit Login Script option. Not a good idea.

Connections

If all goes according to plan, it should just be a matter of clicking on 'Connect' to make TermiteTCP dial up and forge the connection. A nice touch is the little GUI showing the PPP negotiation in a little text string underneath the buttons. When it's time to close the connection, the user merely has to press the disconnect button.

TermiteTCP is a well documented and simple TCP/IP stack. It will get you on the Internet but provides no facility for an IdentD so you can't run your own services on your machine. This means you'll never be able to install fun clients such as AmiPhone and AmiSlate covered in Wired World previously. This is a major oversight and unforgivable given the price. The provided FTP and Telnet clients work but are extremely basic and there are far better PD/shareware packages available which will work under TermiteTCP. The lack of the automatic configuration could be forgiven as that's a miracle seemingly Miami alone has managed on any platform. Unfortunately, the memory usage, slow performance, lack of features and finicky connections does little to impress. With some more features and a lower price point this could be a real contender. The fact that TermiteTCP doesn't use MUI will please some though amazingly it uses more memory than Miami. While this is a competent package for basic net tinkerers, I can find very little other than it's excellent manual to recommend TermiteTCP over Miami.■

Mat Bettinson

TERMITE TCP

A500 | A500+ | A600 | A1200 | A1500 | A2000 | A3000 | A4000

system requirements: Kickstart 2.0, Modem, Internet account and at least 2Mb of RAM however more is recommended.

ease of use 88%
Easy to use GUIs for configuration and an excellent manual.

performance 76%
It works but performance and features are quite limited.

value for money 58%
Way too much money for what's on offer especially given that many (more capable) AmiTCP installers are free.

OVERALL
No IdentD facility is an unforgivable oversight.

74

Miami

The cheaper the better (literally)

Variables	Miami 1.0	TermiteTCP 1.0	AmiTCP 4.3
Cost	£25.00	£59.95	£79.95
Demo Available	Yes	No	Yes
Printed Manual	No *	Yes	Yes
On-line Help	Yes	No	No
FTP client	No	Yes	Yes
Telnet client	No	Yes	Yes
MUI required	Yes	No	No
PPP capability	Yes	Yes	No **
(C)SLIP capability	Yes	No	Yes
Slirp/TIA capability	Yes	No	No
Inet Daemon (servers)	Yes	No	Yes
FingerD	Yes	No	Yes
IndentD	Yes	No	No ***
SANA-II support	No	No	Yes
Built-in Dialer	Yes	Yes	No
ISP teach program	Yes	No	No
Text cfg Import/Export	Yes	No	No
AmiTCP cfg Import	Yes	No	N/A
Configuration	Excellent	Passable	Terrible
AmiTCP emulation	Excellent	Passable	N/A
Memory Usage	538856 bytes	770000 bytes	321040 bytes
localhost FTP rate	191K/s	N/A	180K/s
Modem FTP rate	3160cps	2077cps	3060cps ****

FOOTNOTES: * Postscript/DVI available for registered users. ** SANA-II driver required. *** Can be added manually. **** Using registered PPP.device 1.45.

Miami

■ Price: £25 ■ Developer: Holger Kruse
■ Supplier: Epic Marketing ✆0500 131486

Since the shareware version of Miami was released, Amiga users have deserted in their droves from AmiTCP. Unlike TermiteTCP, there's a public version available whose main limitation is that after one hour the package hangs up the line (with an option to redial). This is enough to see how well it works and for some it may be all they need. So how does it compare with AmiTCP and TermiteTCP?

Miami has no installer and like Termite, requires no assigns or other installation. Currently, there's two program icons, a Miami.guide and a readme. Unlike TermiteTCP, Miami has a separate program called MiamiInit which is used to set up the basics of an Internet connection. The lack of a printed manual doesn't pose a problem because at any stage from MiamiInit to Miami, you can press HELP for the relevant Amiga Guide documentation.

Modems

The MiamiInit program guides you through the process superbly. A text view at the top explains what the settings mean and points you towards the correct values to enter. This is a much more hands on approach than TermiteTCP which involves reading the manual first. MiamiInit also has a database of modems so that if yours is in the list, it sets it all up for you.

MiamiInit is excellent – even the tricky aspect of setting up the dial-script is a doddle. Instructions are in the ever present text view while a small terminal opens at the bottom to dial up the provider. The buttons in the middle are for things like the username and password. Again, once this is performed, Miami will remember the procedure for later automatic dialling. MiamiInit will query the Internet provider, once the connection is made, on some of the technical values which TermiteTCP and AmiTCP need to have entered by hand. Once it's interrogated these values it saves them out itself. Even if some of these stages fail, MiamiInit will ask you the values while on-line so it can check to see if they are correct – a brilliant innovation.

The program can now be activated as this is the TCP/IP stack proper. The complex GUI interfaces are here but are hidden from view until the config options has been selected. Firstly, a menu must be activated to import the MiamiInit settings. That done, usually nothing more is required other than hitting the Online button. However, if further tweaks are needed, they can be done from here.

Incomings

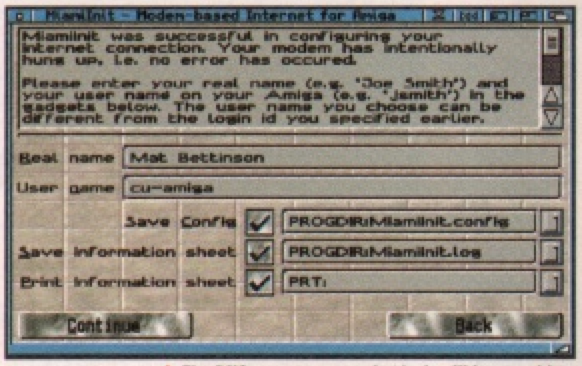
Miami will import settings from AmiTCP. It will also export all of its settings as ASCII which you could share with an expert if problems did arise. Alternatively it's expected many Amiga supporting Internet providers will provide most of their config details as text which can be quickly imported into Miami as well. InternetFCI, for example, already supports Miami officially. Miami has settings for scripts/executables to launch upon linking up/down which is yet another neat feature. There's an InetD server which is necessary for running your own web/ftp services, AmiPhone and most usually an SMTPd for use with providers like Demon.

Technically Miami is superb. Its AmiTCP emulation is faultless, its built-in CSLIP and PPP implementations are the fastest I've seen. Miami even managed to outperform a Pentium PC at a raw download from our FTP space. My only real niggle with the MUI interface is that it's quite large, even though it's separated into many pages. This is not a serious problem since most people will leave it iconified but it would be nice to have a tiny little GUI like TermiteTCPs with connect/disconnect and dial/PPP negotiation status.

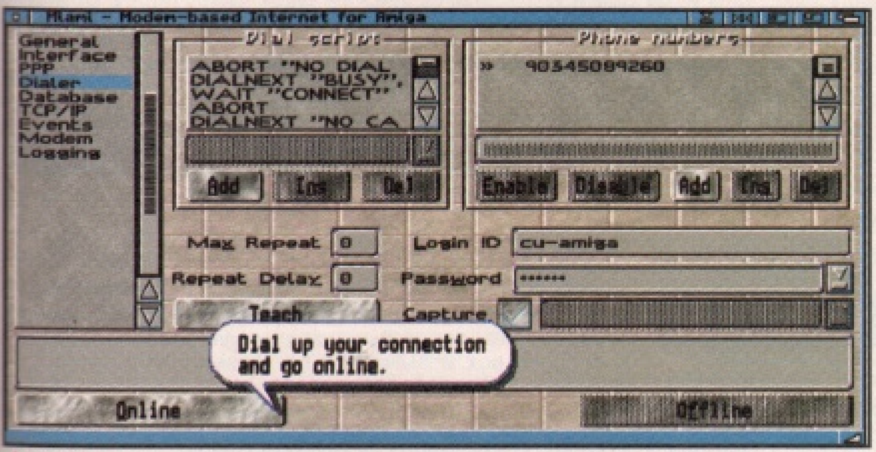
Unlike the others, Miami comes with no client software at all but in practice this isn't a problem since the sensible would use the far better third party PD/shareware clients created for AmiTCP anyway. The AmiTCP support executables, such as telnet, ping and finger, work well but aren't provided – so for maximum use one would need an old AmiTCP demo or the like.

Overall I love Miami. It has everything to offer new and old Internet users alike. It offers superb performance and tremendous value for money and there's even the luxury of try-before-you-buy. Don't get on the Net without it. Even if you're already netted up it's still worth trying.■

Mat Bettinson



▲ The DNS servers, once checked, will be saved by MiamiInit for Miami. It'll even print out a report.



▲ The MUI GUI allows you to change any configuration aspect that you'd like, the dial script section is shown in the picture above..

MIAMI

A500 / A500+ / A600 / A1200 / A1500 / A2000 / A3000 / A4000

system requirements: Kickstart 2.04, MUI 3.3, Modem, Internet account and 2Mb of memory

ease of use 98%
I can think of little the author could have done to make this complex process easier.

performance 96%
Most everything necessary is built-in while still remaining both compact and speedy.

value for money 98%
£25 for a product of this quality is nothing short of scandalous. This is the bargain of the century.

OVERALL
The ultimate Amiga Internet software has arrived.
97%

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Cyberstorm II

■ Price: £649.95 ■ Made by: Phase 5 ■ Supplier: Harwoods © 01773 836781

AMIGA MAGAZINE SUPERSTAR

The long awaited successor to the awesome CyberStorm 060 has arrived. If speed is what you're after – then this card will supply all you need.

The first time Motorola's King of the 68000 series, the 68060, appeared on the Amiga it debuted on the A4000 with Phase 5's CyberStorm 060 card. At the time it was the fastest Amiga accelerator ever, but it was expensive and ungainly with the SIMMs and CPU being fitted to their own sub-modules. Its successor, the CyberStorm-II, has been far better integrated with the SIMMs and CPU on the one board. It does, still retain the connector for the optional CyberSCSI module to be added later. And although the CS-II doesn't come with a heatsink, it wasn't necessary in the first place as the 3.3V CPU runs cool enough not to need it.

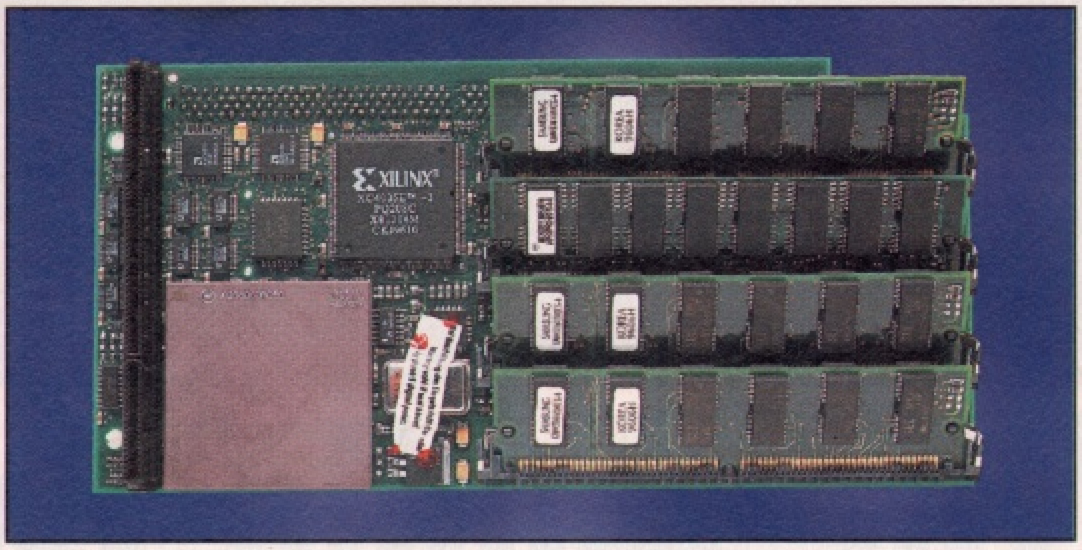
Installation is straightforward in the A4000 but it involves disassembly of the A3000's chassis. On the A4000, the existing CPU card must be removed first. The A4000 also needs to have two jumpers adjusted so that the motherboard's clock is used rather than the Cyberstorm's. This is because the Cyberstorm's is much faster than the original A4000 040 card's clock. Doing this means that the CPU and motherboard are now 'asynchronous'.

As far as RAM is concerned, unlike virtually all of the competing 68040 and 68060 cards from competitors, the CS-II requires no jumper changes (on many cards you have to adjust jumpers according to the amount of RAM you install). Providing simple rules are followed, different sized SIMMs can be mounted with ease up to a maximum of 128Mb using 32Mb SIMMs. This is a major advantage considering how much of a pain other cards can be. The SIMMs sockets will easily accommodate double sided SIMMs too if needs be.

Flash Gordon

A new powerful feature of the CS-II is it's on-board flash memory, which holds valuable configuration details such as the memory timing. Updates from Phase 5 are already available to alter the settings for different speed RAM to optimise the memory bus performance. However, as Phase 5 point out, the bus is currently fast enough that you'd be hard pressed to notice the difference in real world tests.

One niggle is that the manual supplied is poor. Whoever translated it somehow managed to miss translating some text, so you've got lists of instructions which start off in English and suddenly continue in German. But worse than this is the fact that technical data is at a minimum. Fortunately the CS-II is the least problematic A4000 accelerator I've yet dealt with so this isn't such a strain as it might have been.



▲ No longer the space hogging monster the first version was, CyberStorm II is reasonably sized and can take plenty of RAM.

Record breaker

So how does the CyberStorm perform? Like a bat out of hell! My A4000T was already no major slouch with a 25MHz 68040 but the CS-II has still managed to to redefine what I thought of as fast. There's no time waiting for my extravagantly textured MUI interfaces to open and multitasking seems as if there's a good 68040 running each task. Software problems were also non existent; I didn't find a single application which fell over on the 68060. The emulation and CyberPatcher has obviously improved since the original. However, it's worth noting that without a graphics board the CyberStorm will be somewhat crippled.

For 3D rendering fans the CyberStorm, as with the Blizzard 1260, has some revolutionary software called CyberPatcher. This patches the unimplemented FPU instructions found in ray tracing code to instructions that are supported. The resulting astronomical speed increase severely overshadows any alternative 68060 card. For this reason, the CyberStorm is the fastest accelerator currently available on big-box Amigas in both hardware specification and real world performance.

The CyberStorm II keeps up the Phase 5 tradition of high quality powerful products and while it's documentation needs work, the hardware and support software is first class. With one of these and a graphics card, your Amiga will seriously toast a PC of even superior specification. The reduced price is very welcome and the performance is enough to make using the Amiga for professional rendering an option again. This is the ultimate big-box Amiga accelerator. ■

Mat Bettinson

CYBERSTORM

A500 | A500+ | A600 | A1200 | A1500 | A2000 | A3000 | A4000

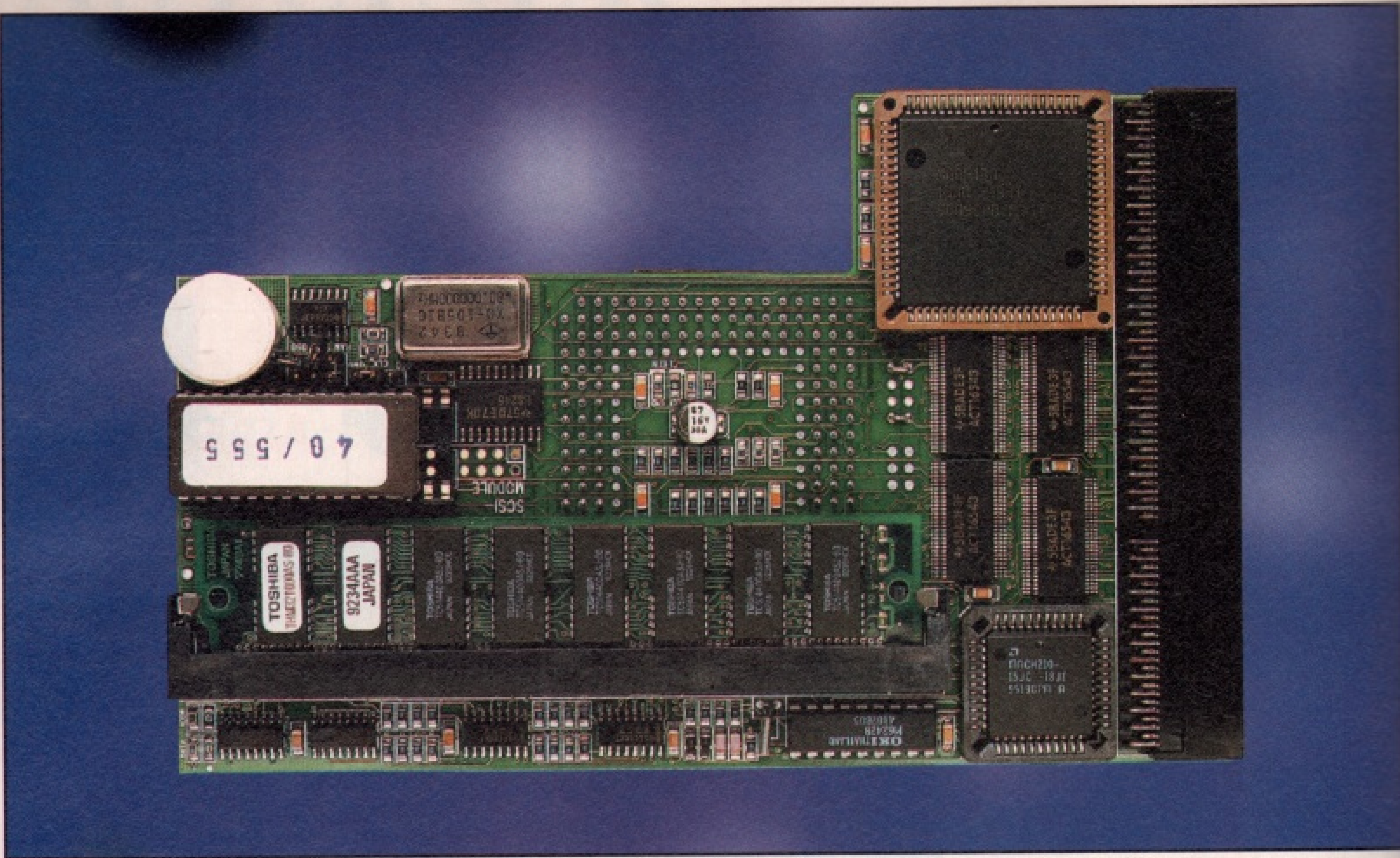
system requirements:
A3000, A3000T, A4000, A4000T

ease of use 88%
Installation is straightforward though documentation needs improving

performance 97%
The Amiga wont get faster than this until the PowerPC arrives

value for money 88%
A significant improvement and although the high CPU cost still hurts, a recent £50 price drop is significant

OVERALL
This is how computing was meant to be!
91%



▲ The Apollo 1240. Good value, especially with Siren's RAM offer.

The Apollo Twins

Apollo 1240/1260 accelerators

Lift off the trapdoor and launch one of these babies into your A1200; you won't hear any more creaking noises during rendering ...

Just like the totally blowaway Cyberstorm on page 52, the Apollo 040 and 060 cards are intended to increase the performance of your A1200 beyond your wildest dreams. The standard A1200 is so outdated by modern software, it really can't cope. And if you want to compare your Amiga to a PC, even a 486, or a modern Macintosh, then you need speed.

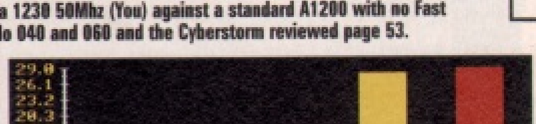
So what will these two babies do to help move things on? Both boards look very similar from the top down because, unlike the Blizzard, the business end (the Motorola CPU) is mounted on the top of the board against bottom of your keyboard and not touching the trapdoor. The 060 model is equipped with a power convertor to convert the board's power supply (5v) to the 3.5v the 68060 requires. Although the 040 does not need this converter, added excitement and bulk is added to it by a fan and miniature heatsink. These are needed because the 40Mhz 68040 is the hottest chip Motorola ever made; without cooling assistance your Amiga will regularly crash. Out of necessity, the fan/heatsink on the 68040 are placed to one side so that it fits under the keyboard. It looks awkward but it's a better system than the Falcon 040's larger but heatsink-less fan.

Breeding heavily

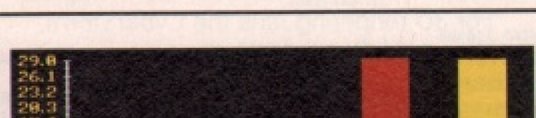
One niggle I have with both of these boards is that the SCSI module must be soldered in rather than using the edge connector plug-in method favoured by Phase 5 for the Blizzards. That means that you are going to have to send your Apollos back to the dealer to have a SCSI chip installed after purchase. Of course you can order them fitted from the start if you want. Both

On your marks, get set ...

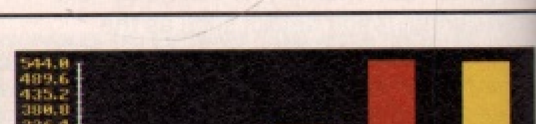
Here we've tested a 1230 50Mhz (You) against a standard A1200 with no Fast RAM (NF), the Apollo 040 and 060 and the Cyberstorm reviewed page 53.



▲ Here the Dhrystone benchmark shows a standardised CPU performance benchmark with no FPU instructions.



▲ An emulation benchmark shows how fast emulation of an 80x86 CPU is performed – again without FPU instructions.



▲ Using basic FPU instructions which are in the 040 and 060, the flops benchmark shows the 060s performing very well.

CyberPatcher away!

Phase 5's 68060 accelerators still have a significant performance edge that's almost solely due to CyberPatcher. We asked Ralph Schmidt, who developed the software for Phase 5, some questions about his creation.

Q. Why was 68060 optimisation software deemed necessary by Phase 5?

A. When we developed the card in Summer 1995, a lot of software used instructions which aren't implemented in the 68060 any more. Gerald Carda and I came up with the idea to patch these instructions in real time. The initial CyberPatcher was written around September 1994.

Q. Which instructions are missing?

The 060 has almost every 680x0 instruction apart from some in the 68020, but the main problem lies with unimplemented 6888x FPU instructions.

Q. How does CyberPatcher work?

A. CyberPatcher snoops for instructions which would normally be handled by the emulation and tries to patch those instructions with a replacement. The difference between emulation and the CyberPatched routines is that the emulation has to emulate the opcode and runs in Supervisor mode where multitasking is disabled. The resulting Cyber Patched opcodes don't have the same overhead and so are much faster.

Q. So what kind of applications benefit from this?

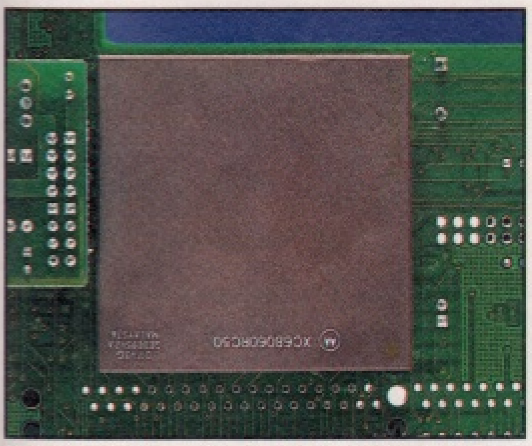
A. Ones which use a lot of opcodes which aren't implemented. FPU examples: Scenery Animator, Imagine, LightWave, Cinema 4D. Integer examples: PGP (an E-mail encryption package) and Mand2000.

Q. Finally, are there any plans to release CyberPatcher which will work with other brands of accelerator?

A. Not at the moment.

boards are also supplied with the relevant library software to get them up and running, including a 68040.library for the 040 and a 68060.library for the 060 unit. These libraries emulate the CPU instructions which were dropped on later processors.

The Apollo 68060 has a faster memory interface than even Phase 5's Blizzard 1260. This makes it the fastest memory interface yet seen on the Amiga. If it wasn't for the major oversight of no patching software, the Apollo 1260 would make your machine the fastest Amiga in the world. (See the CyberPatcher boxout above for a more detailed explanation of this). This means that with both benchmarks and real-world applications, the Apollo 1260 performs very badly with FPU heavy tasks such as 3D rendering – one of the reasons anyone would want to spend over £500 on an accelerator upgrade. But how does it handle games and other software? With The Killing Grounds there was only about a 10% increase in speed. Full screen was still not possible, despite the fact that on the Blizzard 1260 it was more impressive. Much to his surprise the 1240 outperformed its bigger brother, giving about a 20-25% speed increase – almost fast enough to play at full screen.



▲ The 060 chip is actually cooler than the 040, hence no fan.

Why was this: surely the 68060 is the faster board? Again it comes down to the emulation of unsupported instructions, in particular MoveP. Software which doesn't make efforts to avoid these instructions will be prone to performance loss unless special patching software is available (which it isn't with the Apollo). However, the 68040 doesn't suffer from as many problems and you can get 68040 optimised versions of critical applications such as 3D rendering packages like Cinema 4D. Running these on the Apollo 40MHz 68040 is going to be fast. Certainly many times faster than the unassisted Apollo 68060.

Surprise result

Given the extra expense and poor performance of the Apollo 1260, I find little to recommend it: the Blizzard 1260 is still the A1200s ultimate accelerator, but it does so at a very hefty price. And there is now a weighty alternative: Siren Software, who supplied us with these boards, are offering 60ns 16Mb SIMMs for only £100 when you buy an Apollo. As little as £475 buys you a fast 68040 card with a healthy quantity of memory. This gives you vast processing power for nearly £200 less than a Blizzard 1260 with a similar amount of RAM.

The cooling and power consumption of this card is still a factor and a beefier power supply may be needed if an internal HD is in use, but you can't argue with its abilities. Hopefully Apollo's will provide patching software for the 060 card, in which case it should outperform the current Blizzard 1260. Until then though, the 060 is overshadowed by it's cheaper and faster little brother. ■

Mat Bettinson



▲ The 1240 needs both a heat sink and a fan to keep cool.



▲ In a test of raw memory speed, the Apollo 1260 shows it has the fastest memory interface on the Amiga.



▲ A telling examination of how the 040 and 060 CPUs perform emulating the complex FPU instructions used in ray tracing.

APOLLO 1240

A500 · A500+ · A600 · **A1200** · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: A1200 only. Requires Fast RAM for performance increase.

ease of use 90%
Installation is incredibly simple for both hardware and software.

performance 91%
Memory access is extremely nippy, CPU performance is excellent.

value for money 89%
This is more like what accelerators should cost. Well worth the dosh.

OVERALL
A superb value refit to give the A1200 a serious boost. **90%**

APOLLO 1260

A500 · A500+ · A600 · **A1200** · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: A1200 only. Requires Fast RAM for performance increase

ease of use 90%
Like its brother installation is also very simple and easy to do.

performance 68%
Without patching software, the 68060 lets the side down badly.

value for money 75%
Cheaper than the competitor but it just can't deliver the goods.

OVERALL
Brilliant hardware let down by the 68060's nature and no software. **77%**

Dynamode Modems

■ **Price: 14400 £89.99/28800 £149.99** ■ **Developer: Dynamode** ■ **Supplier: OnLine PD © 01704 834335**

Two modems which look the same but perform radically differently. Value for money or what?

Given the recent explosion of Internet software on the Amiga, now is a damn good time to take the plunge and sign up to get on the Net. All you'll need is some Internet Software, (see Miami and TermiteTCP on page 50), and an account with an Internet Service Provider. InternetFCI still have a three month trial offer for CU Amiga readers for only £20.00. Call them at FCI on 01273-763000 for details. Once that's done, you need the final missing link which is a Modem.

Updated Mr Modem

OnLine PD have sourced updated modems to the Mr Modem range (which I quite liked from the last Modem round-up). Sporting the same compact size, front power on/off switch and easy to see LEDs on the front panel, the only difference is that it's gone beige instead of blank. This aspect is a turn for the worse and makes them look a little cheap. They've even got 'Modem' written on them in case you ever forgot what that box was sitting on your desk, lights flashing away.

The modems badged 'Dynamode' may not be a 'name' brand but they've got a feature I didn't expect to see on a BT and CE approved modem: a pass-through connector to plug your telephone into. That way when the modem is on-line, you can't pick up the phone on it. A very handy facility as you also never have to unplug the modem. CE approval seems to be obsessed by RF emission and in this case both the power and telephone cables are wrapped around RF 'chokes' to stop any interference which may result.

Techno-laden fair

The supplied manuals are the usual techno-laden fair which is a useful reference once you get to grips with how to drive the modem. A serial cable is provided and thoughtfully it has both a 25 and 9 pin D connectors on the computer end which will keep Surf Squirrel users happy too. A telephone cable and a double adaptor is provided and a Pipex-Dial Internet offer though it's supplied with PC software useless for the Amiga. Both sport two year return-to-base warrantees which is good for peace of mind.

At this point, the two different modems part company. Physically on the outside they may be the same but internal specifications differ wildly. The cheaper unit supports only V32.bis which is the name of the standard for a rate of 14400 bps. This means it takes about nine minutes on-line to transfer a full floppy disk worth of data.

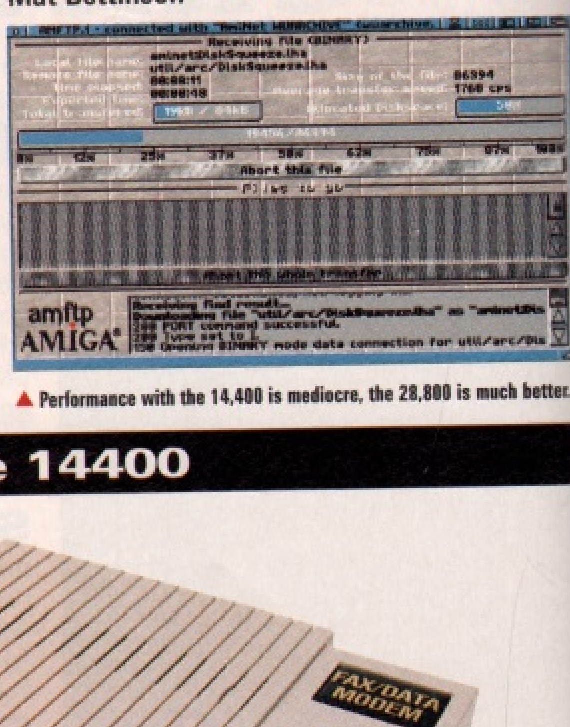
The more expensive modem supports V.FC (unlike Mr Modem) and V34 whose standard dictates a 28800 bps rate moving the same data in 4 and a half minutes. The 14400 bps unit does however have 'Voice' support with a microphone and speaker jack on the same. This would certainly be handy if only the Amiga had some Voice mail software, which so far, it doesn't.

Worked faultlessly

Both modems have Fax Class 2 capability at 9600 and 14400 and this proved to work sufficiently well with GP Fax. The V34/28K Dynamode did show some fondness for retaining (re-negotiating a connection) when calling InternetFCI and Demon. This sometimes adds a little extra time to how long it takes to connect though it's not a serious problem. The V32bis/14K Dynamode worked faultlessly in terms of connection but was slower. One negative point is the small power packs provided as they run a little too hot for comfort.

Overall these are good cheap modems that work. OnLine even throw in a 31 disk pack of Amiga comms-related software which is a little unnecessary since if you get yourself on-line you can download them yourself. Still, it's a nice touch. They also supply a few sheets of extra information such as Amiga BBS numbers etc also. At 90 quid for the V32/14K4 modem, no-one's got an excuse for not getting one. However the V34 unit is also comparatively inexpensive and will save money in the longer term because of faster downloads.■

Mat Bettinson



▲ Performance with the 14,400 is mediocre, the 28,800 is much better.

Dynamode 28800

Best Buy



88%

Dynamode 14400



85%

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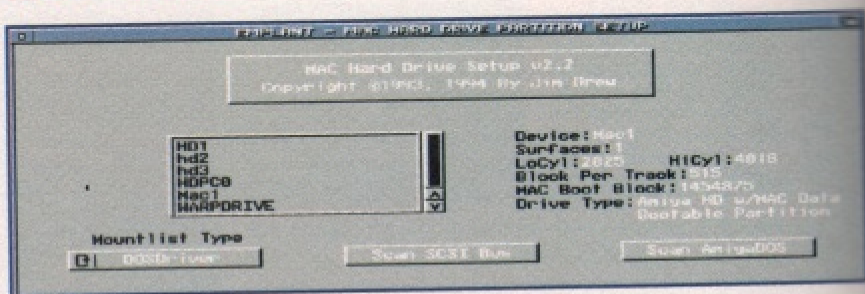
ch better.

5 %

Emplant MacLite and Mac 1200

■ **Price: £59.95/£49.95** ■ **Developer: Jim Drew** ■ **Supplier: Blittersoft © 01908 261477**

If you think an Apple is just for eating you're barking up the wrong tree. However if you fancy getting your teeth into the computer version Emplant could be for you ...



▲ Emplant comes with a separate utility to create and manage Apple format drives and files.

They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but the picture is a little confused when it comes to Emplant. The original Emplant was sold as a package including a Zorro II card, which kept the price up and user base down. It also meant that it could provide SCSI and AppleTalk connections, and this version remains the only feasible way of using certain Apple peripherals, such as the Mac-specific AppleTalk networking system.

The shareware ShapeShifter package poached many would-be customers by dispensing with the hardware and providing a software only emulation package. It meant Apple emulation on the cheap, and has since proved to be incredibly popular.

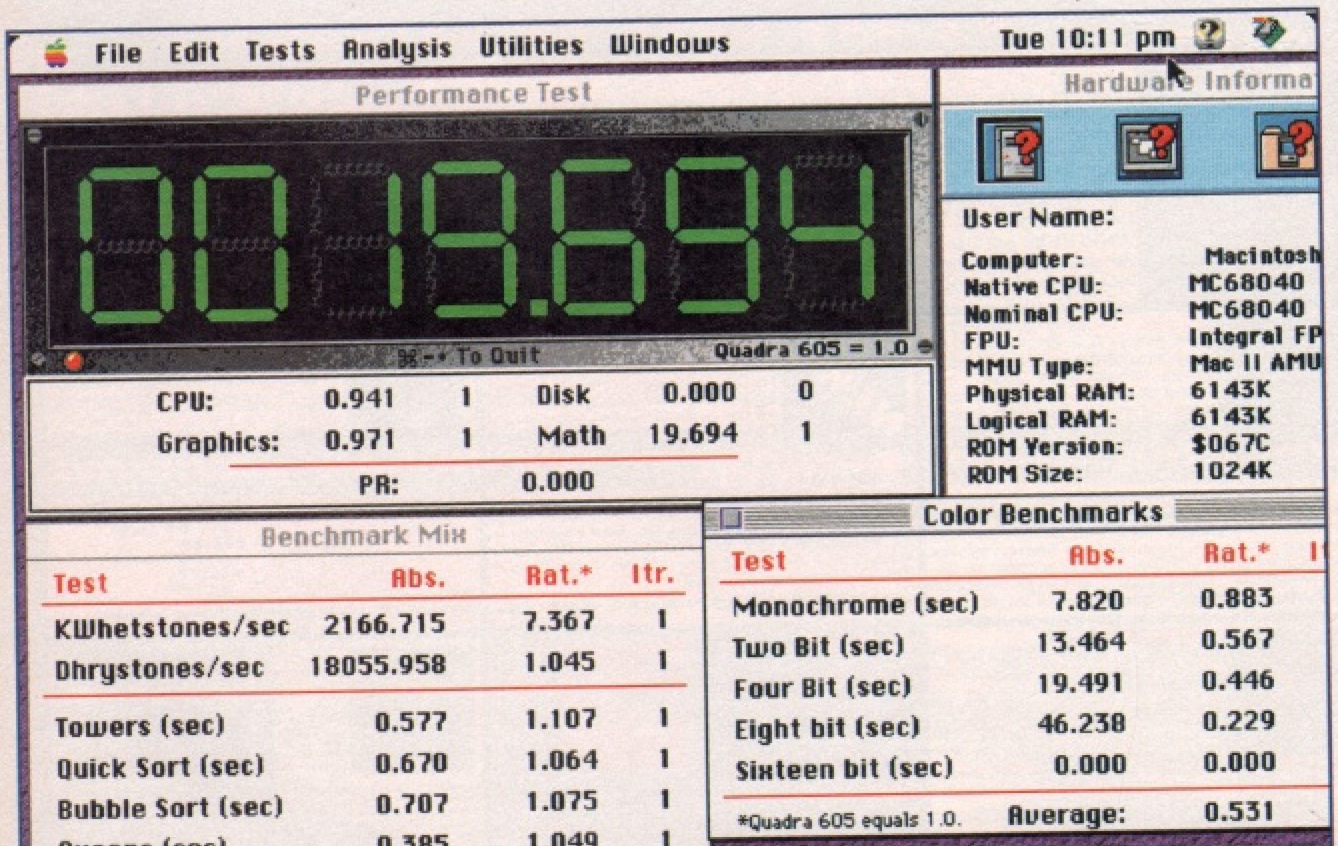
Now it's Emplant's turn. Torn from the hardware, there are two new versions of Emplant available: Mac1200 specifically for the A1200, and MacLite for any 68020 or better Amiga. Both are software only systems, clearly designed to win back some ground lost to ShapeShifter.

Performance tests

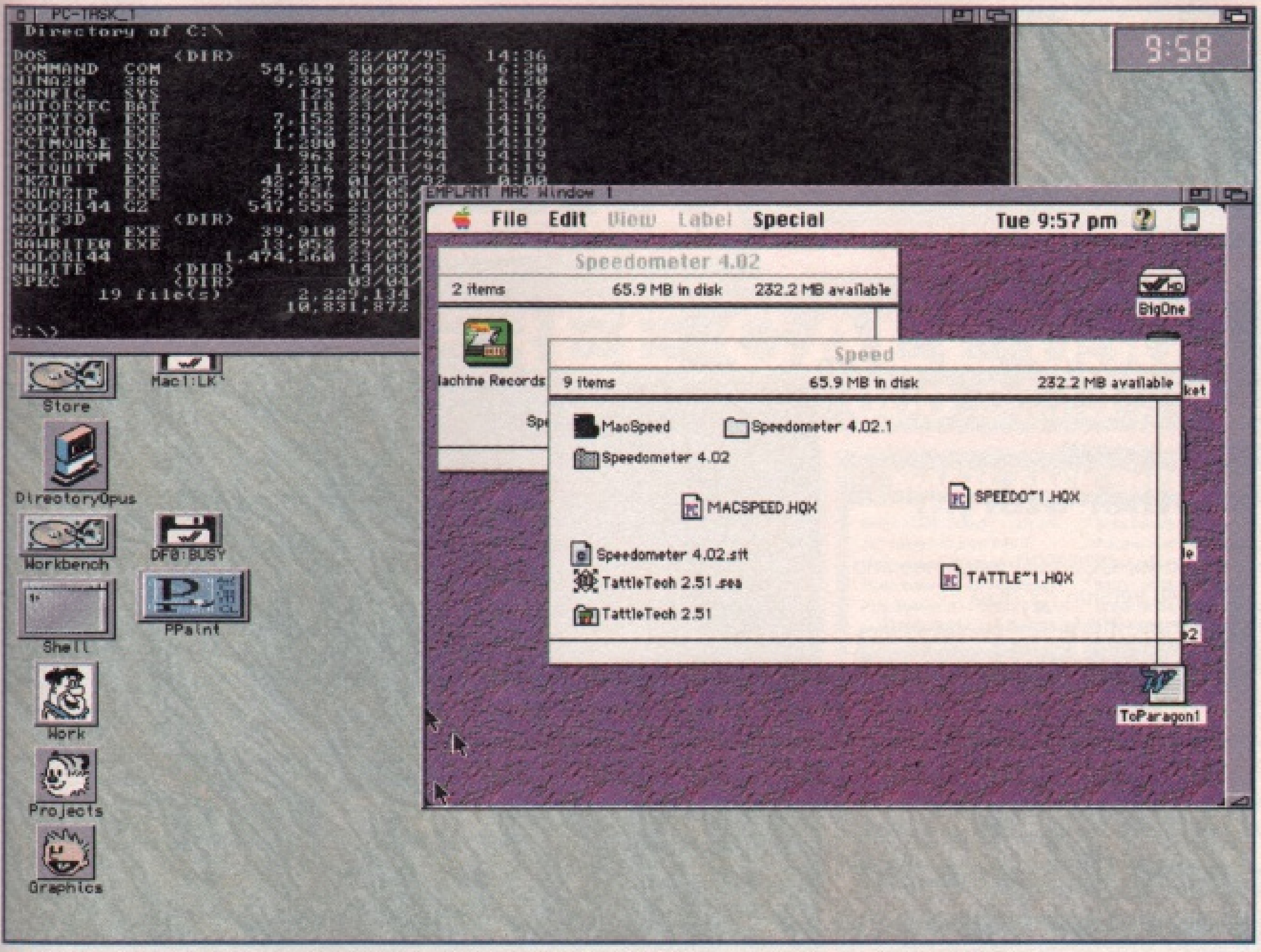
At heart, both Emplant and ShapeShifter are going to run at similar speeds, simply because of the fact that the Apple programs are running on the Amiga's processor directly. This also keeps the speeds in line with genuine Apple computers based on the same processor. There are two real performance bottlenecks: disk access and graphics.

Although both Emplant and ShapeShifter will work with a dummy file system based on single huge files existing on a standard AmigaDOS disk partition, the best solution is to provide a complete partition. Both systems experience huge performance increases when given their own Apple format partitions to play in. In fact, I was able to make Emplant use the partition I had been using for months with ShapeShifter without making any major modifications.

Graphics are the big problem however. Apple and Amiga screen modes work in different ways: the Apple likes chunky pixels, the



▲ Benchmarking software in action on Emplant, running in AGA mode.



▲ It's not often you see three operating systems on one screen: Amiga, PC (thanks to PC Task) and Apple Mac, thanks to Emplant MacLite.

Amiga uses Bitplanes. If you have a graphics card there isn't a problem, and your emulated Mac will fly. However, most Amiga users don't have access to a graphics card or any slots in which to fit one. It's therefore important that emulation of the screen modes on the Amiga's native display is as fast and efficient as possible.

Emplant offers many different screen modes to suit your working requirements. If you are lucky enough to own a graphics card, a CyberGraphics driver is supplied (although I couldn't get a display larger than 640 by 480). If you don't have an external video card, there are PAL and NTSC drivers and special AGA versions. You can also open up a window on the Workbench if you want to impress passing PC owners. The fastest video driver is the black and white display. Fast, but not terribly attractive. You will be able to run word processors and so on, but Photoshop will look a little drab. With a decent processor (read a good 68030) and Fast RAM, the 16 colour display is impressive, and the 256 colour display is still useable.

Interlace headache

The bad news is that displays will be in interlaced (i.e. flicker) mode unless you are using an AGA machine and have a monitor capable of displaying Multiscan displays. If you do have this set-up, you are spoilt for choice when it comes to picking a display. Besides all the usual 2, 4, 16 and 256 colour Mac modes, using HAM8, Emplant can even emulate 15/24 bit screens. Overall, screen updates seemed considerably smoother than ShapeShifter, so I ran some benchmarking programs for a more accurate measurement. The results are displayed hereabouts. It's interesting to note that drivers for the Graffiti graphics card are promised and that could boost performance a great deal.

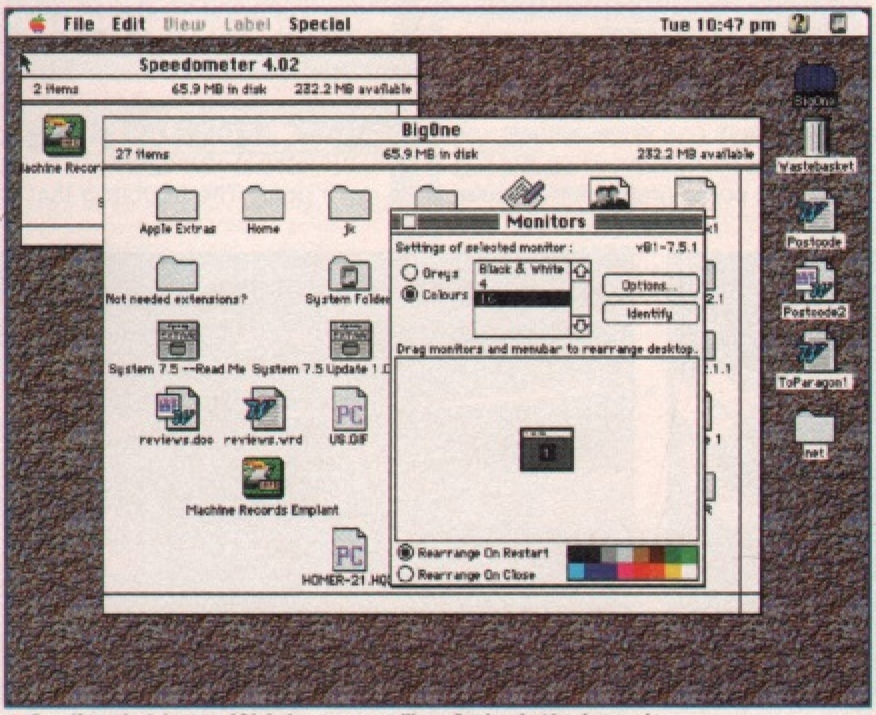
Memory matters

For some reason, Emplant seemed less happy with grabbing all the available memory. If your memory expansion happens to deal in memory in chunks rather than in contiguous blocks, ShapeShifter can sometimes find a few more bytes. Neither of these programs will support Virtual Memory or use the MMU to group together all memory pools: although these features are apparently available with the hardware based Emplant system. Another hitch was that floppy disk access seemed to be slower through Emplant than through ShapeShifter.

So, is turning your Amiga into a Mac all that good? Certainly it's fun and it can be very useful too: how else are you going to run Microsoft Word, Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer? PC emulation is too slow for monster software like that. The big catch is that you need the Apple operating system software and the ROM image from a genuine Apple Mac. The software is no problem (heck, it was on the last CU Amiga CD-ROM) but the ROM can be. I happen to own an LCIII Mac which meant I could use the supplied program to snapshot the ROM image. However, you might not be so lucky.

These new versions of Emplant are very welcome, if not overdue. I had no serious complaints to make about them, and if you haven't seen a Mac emulation in action you will be seriously impressed. Emplant supports SCSI hardware, networking protocols and CD-ROM drives. Should you use it instead of ShapeShifter? If you have a graphics card, it doesn't seem to make a great deal of difference which program to use (although until the CyberGraphics display bug is fixed and the screen can be increased to 800 by 600, I'll probably use ShapeShifter more). However, for A1200 owners, Emplant would seem to be a lot faster than ShapeShifter, and that could very reasonably be taken to be the deciding factor. ■

John Kennedy



▲ Even if you don't have an AGA Amiga, you can still use Emplant in 16 colour mode.

MACLITE, MAC 1200

A500 · A500+ · A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements:
Amiga with 68020 processor or better and 4Mb of RAM

ease of use.........................80%
Getting it set up can be a nightmare, however, the emulation software itself it incredibly easy to operate

performance.........................95%
Very fast video modes make this the fastest Apple Mac emulation you are likely to see on the Amiga. Very impressive

value for money.................90%
A new computer for sixty quid? Yes please

OVERALL
An excellent version of this grand-daddy of Mac emulators
91%

Photo CD Manager

■ Price: £29.95 ■ Developer: ASIM Innovations ■ Supplier: Siren Software ✆ 0161 796 5279

Looking for a slideshow? You're sorted. A manager for your photoCDs? That's another story...

With photoCDs you can have your own pictures put on CD-ROM instead of film prints. Also you can wave goodbye to tons of bulky photo albums clogging up your living room because, as these types of CDs are multi session CDs, you can keep going back to add more pictures to your CD until it is full.

This sounds really handy but wouldn't it be too difficult and expensive to do? Not really. Once you've shot a roll of film buy a blank gold writable CD (cost about £10) if this is your first set of films to go on CD. Then take both to a development centre which handles PhotoCDs. Check the Yellow Pages for one in your area. Next, the developer processes the film, (normally only the negatives are needed), and scanned in at an amazing 3072 x 2048 pixels. The resulting PCD files are burnt onto the CD.

Once you have all your pictures on a CD, perhaps you need something to help you organise them? This is where PhotoCD Manager comes in. It's produced by ASIM Innovations, the Canadian developer who specialises in CD-ROM support including the ASIM CD filesystem and MasterISO. The program is on CD in the form of a simple installer and 36 PCD files on the CD. There are also two versions of PhotoCD Manager, a HAM version for OCS/ECS machines and a HAM8 version for AGA machines. It's simple to use and has an attractive custom GUI on an interlaced HAM or HAM8 screen (it can be forced to DBLPal). If a PhotoCD is inserted into the CD-ROM, PCD Manager will scan the PhotoCD and compose thumbnail pictures. These are in banks which can be activated by clicking on the number range gadgets. PCD Manager also saves the thumbnails to HD so that when the disk is next inserted, it only takes a second to import the thumbnails.



▲ Seen here is the interface for PhotoCD Manager, the HAM8 version.

Not a manager

PhotoCD is a more a slideshow than a manager. The thumbnails can be viewed in a small window or added to a slideshow. The PhotoCD standard specifies whether pictures are to be viewed horizontally or vertically. The rest of the slideshow features are basic; two kinds of wipe and loop/pause options and insert and delete buttons for slideshow.

I can only see PhotoCD Manager being of use to someone creating a demonstration with a CD32 (which PhotoCD manager has full joypad support for) or as a basic viewer if the owner didn't already have one. I would have liked a lot more support on the CD including some graphics manipulation utilities and even more PCD files considering less than 200Mb of the CD is used.

The list of what PhotoCD manager doesn't do is far longer than what it does. For instance the viewer uses a horrible 384 x 256 resolution regardless of using the HAM8 version which could easily support the PCD built-in 768 x 512 mode. It also won't save out as anything other than the low resolution HAM8 IFF. There's no optimisation in the palette to avoid HAM8 fringing. Amongst other things you should be able to catalogue the thumbnails off HD to 'manage' your Photo CD collection.

Poor quality

What PhotoCD Manager sets out to do, it does. The trouble is that this isn't very much. If you have a CD filesystem capable of reading PhotoCDs then you can load the pictures into commercial and shareware packages which support PCD at the resolution PCD files support (such as ImageFX) and achieve much better results.

However, given that PCD Manager works nicely on a stock CD32 it does have some uses. Most people however should steer clear and spend the money on shareware/commercial packages which can process PCD files and possibly create better slideshows with something like MainActor. What a pity. ■

Mat Bettinson

PHOTO CD MANAGER	
A500	**system requirements:** KS 2.0, 1Mb of RAM CD32
A500+	
A600	**ease of use**......90% Big large gadgets and nice CD32 support
A1200	**performance**......62% Nowhere near enough features and lack of Hires HAM8 is unforgivable.
A1500	**value for money**......75% Could be useful for presentations, otherwise not much use ...
A2000	
A3000	**OVERALL** A package with potential but sadly unfulfilled. **76%**
A4000	



▲ This is a PhotoCD file as viewed by PhotoCD Manager in HAM8 384 x 256.



▲ This is the same PhotoCD file as it could look in a higher resolution.

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* special offer £1 off if you order 5 or more pd disks

music

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M002 MICHAEL JACKSON-song BAD
M003 DO THE BART MAN
M005 100 C64 TUNES (not A1200)
M006 BAT-DANCE REMIXED
M017 GUNS & ROSES - YOU'RE CRAZY
M018 THE XMAS SONG (disk) very funny
M025 MONEY FOR NOTHING-DIRE STRAITS HIT song
M027 BLUES HOUSE (2 disks)
M084 C64 GAMES MUSIC
M115 MAHONEY & KAKTUS 2 - 40 tunes compilation
M125 ADAMS FAMILY
M147 BANGLES - Walk Like An Egyptien
M150 TIFFANNY I Think We're Alone Now
M171 MADONNA - (Like a Virgin)
M173 JANET JACKSON - RHYTHM NATION
M177 PET SHOP BOYS
M184 SAM FOX - (PLEASE ME)
M186 MADONNA - (RESCUE ME)
M188 JOE Le TAXI
M189 MICHAEL JACKSON (SMOOTH CRIMINAL)
M194 JESUS ON E'S (2 disks)
M205 RAVE - more Rave
M262 A TO Z OF C64 GAMES MUSIC (4) brilliant
M314 DICK TRACY (madonna) (2)
M306 STAR TREK & STAR TREK NEXT GENERATION (2)

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U513 VIDEO TITLER (2 disks) more VIDEO TITLER-BEST
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U921 WEDDING VIDEO ANIM (2 disks) Requires D.Paint 3/4 Very high quality
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U925 VIDEO TITLER - very good video titler

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U029 CAN DO programming language
U033 STARSTAR 1.2 (2D) 3 loads of utils
U038 DISK MAG CREATOR create a disk magazine
U117 NORTH C compiler (2) brill programming language
U120 SID 1.06 copy/delete/move file made very easy
U131 TETRA COPY play tetris while copying disk, great
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U224 SIX MOST USE UTIL lots of very useful utils
U228 SLIDE SHOW CONSTRUCTION KIT easy to make
U238 ARCHIVER TOOLS + lots of crunchers
U242 IMPLODER 4.0 dis file compressor. Excellent
U243 THE ACT COPIER (not WB1.3) 10 disk copier
U249 FRACTAL UTIL, loads of fractal programs, brill
U252 LAND BUILDER create realistic landscapes
U254 COPY & CRACK TOOLS back up your disks
U282 BEGINNERS UTILITIES many useful utils
U284 MESSY SID II read/write PC/MAC etc files
U300 AUTO DISK LOGGER catalogue your disk library
U301 UNECOPY fantastic disk copier
U321 GRAPHIC Util 1 (3) loads of brill graphic utils
U324 GRAPHIC util 2 (3) even more graphic tools
U333 EMULATOR COLLECTION II (lots of emulators)
U334 FREE COPY back up commercial games
U335 MODEL 3D Brilliant 3D object designer
U337 MULTI VISION (2) diskfiles utilities
U338 HACKER-TOOLS many ripper tools
U340 POOL TOOL - predict horses with the best chance
U350 RACE STARTER Similar to above, but both
U351 STAR CAT 2 - create catalogue disk, easy
U358 BEXER find files on floppy & hard drive
U359 R.P.G (2) adventure creator
U360 DISK REPAIR KIT salvage & repair damaged disks
U363 AMIGA BASE Power ASCII files
U372 NCOMM III more modem software + packer util
U377 UNICOPY fantastic disk copier
U380 FRANSCAPE V1.2 new fractal similar to VISTA
U399 SOUND TRACKER V2.6 music maker
U400 SPEED BENCH (not WB1.3) create auto boot WB
U425 NIB 2 very popular copiers
U423 THE RIPPER COLLECTION (not WB3) many ripper progs
U436 SYSINFO test & port info on your Amiga sys
U442 FONT FARM create fonts/editor/design new fonts
U444 WHOM 2 (3 DISKS) Detail/database on 51 films
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U470 FINAL FRONTIER 3 (4 disks) Star-Trek magazine
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U480 B-TECH UTIL Amazing pack with 207 utilities
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U521 SPECTRA PAINT III rival to DPaint
U550 SCENERY CONSTRUCTION KIT FRACTAL, recommend
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U569 ICON ready made (4 disks)
U580 600 NUMERIC PAD EMULATOR (A600 only)
U591 DEGRADER (not WB1.3) A500 emulator
U592 KILL AGA make older programs run on A1200
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U601 DISKSALV II + ABACKUP (not WB1.3)
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U622 ACTION REPLAY V1.5 cartridge on disk
U623 ACTION REPLAY V4 (A1200 ONLY) same as above
U645 PC EMULATOR V2.31 (WB3 only) SVGA PC emulator
U650 COPY & CRACK TOOL 2 more powerful copy programs
U660 NEW SUPER VIRUS KILLER (not WB3) kill 316+ viruses
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U760 ICON PLUS (3 DISKS) Hundreds of stunning ICONS
U761 RELOCKIT 1.4 latest WB1.3 emulator
U762 FAKE FAST MEMORY make older software run
U777 TELETEXT RECEIVER Project. Highly recommended
U781 DOSTRACE V2 display information why some program refuse to run. Also monitor Amiga activity RECOMMENDED
U783 POOL WINNER GOLD must for all gamblers
U789 HARD DISK MEMORY V2 use HD as memory (re MMU)
U790 WINDOW BENCH V2 (WB 2/3) 2 disk new workbench replacement, include lots of useful utilities
U791 COMPUTER DIAGNOSTIC TEST V9 Amiga complete system tester

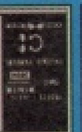
U800 PRINT A CARD include many ready made
U801 MULTI-PRINT V4 lot of printing util
U805 DISK PRINT print custom disk lables
U807 FONT & PRINT Load of utilites to view & print your ... tion. RECOMMED
U830 POOL WIZARD -(football) prediction
U832 DIVENDEND WINNER - Prediction rograme for use ... WOOD, VERMON, ZETTER Ect
U834 FORCASTER 2.02 New Horse prediction Prog
U839 AUDIO MAGIC 4-Protracker V3,Exotic ripper
U843 AUDIO MAGIC 8- Octamed player ect
U846 C64 emulator V3 (2DISK) C64 emulator latest
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U862 DISK COPY Pack- collection of 10 disk copier
U863 OPTI-Utils 1-over 30 disk copier/Optimise ect
U865 INTUTION BENCH MARK V6.5 (Not Wb1.3) ...
U866 COMPLETE WB UTIL (2DISK) very useful Util ...
U867 DISK REPAIR KIT 4-include disk repair, undelete ... diskmate, sysinfo.ect
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U951 FORTH PROGRAMMING (NOT WB 1.3)
U957 SCALA BACKGROUND (2disk) High quality image
U960 PROGRAME LOADER-New HardDisk menu
U961 MAGAZINE E 3(2disk) science fiction magazine
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U967 PRO-GAMBLE-Super Horse prediction programme
U978 DELUXE PAINT 4 BUDDY SYSTEM (2) Get the most ... Paint Instan on line for evry fuction
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U989 AUTOBOOT DISK MAKER V4 -very useful
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U977 MAGICWB ICON ARCHIVE (3) 1000's of MGwb icons
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U979 ICON ACHRIVE(3) 1000's of normal Icon(any Amiga)
U994 TEXTURE STUDIO. Render Various Texture for use with ... 3 ect req FPU.(not 1.3)
U995 PRO-GAMBLES V2 must for all gamblers
U996 BOOKIE BEATER- gambling programe to win bookie
U997 HD GAME INSTALLER 3. install more game to HD
U998 EXOCTIC RIPPER V3.5 Latest ripper
U999 HD MEMORY (new collection) require MMU
U1000 MAGIC OPUS VOL 2 & 3 (2D) more Dopus button
U1001 CAR DATA ANALYST-check your car performance
U1002 TURBO CAT-(WB 2&3 only) catalogue creator
U1003 LOTTORY WINNER V2-new version
U1005 BASIC-ELECTRONIC-Teach all about eletronic
U1006 LOTTO LUNACY V2 Update latest lottery predictor
U1007 ALL NEW HARD-DISK & FLOPPY DISK TOOL 2 (2)
U1008 HARD-WARE PROJECT 2 (2) Build dozen ofproject ... to fit Amigas in a tower case
U1009 DATA ALERT 3-explain why your computer crash
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Massive collection of all the very best puzzle games ever released including some of the classics like Rubic-cube, Picture-Puzzles etc.. much too many to list. Very popular

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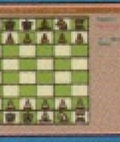


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GAMES

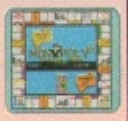
G222 MEGA 21 GAMES amazing 21 games
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G242 TAKE EM OUT like to Operation wolf
G253 DESTINE MOON BASE Arcade conversion
G272 TANK BATTLE 2 player tank battle game
G278 ARCADIA the best ARKNOID clone
G300 Q-BOID cross TETRIX and INVADERS.
G303 DIMENSION X 2 player LIGHT CYCLE GAME
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G316 GALACTIC Excellent 8 levels arcade
G317 HYPER-BALL Speed ball +level editor
G320 GHOST-SHIP Very good 3D adventure
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G333 CYBER-NETIC Brillant 8 way blaster
G334 DONKEY KONG -(A1200 order code AGA296)
G336 CRAZY SUE II- best platform to date
G342 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE (& track editors)
G344 STAR-TREK similar to RAID2 but harder
G355 DOODY very cute & extremely addict
G356 WONDER LAND amazing graphic recommed
G362 DELUXE PACMAN + best pacman ever release
G367 CARD GAMES collection
G368 WIZARD-DOMAINS-dugeon type games
G370 KALATRIZ (notA1200) arcade tetriz clone
G373 AIR ACE II Very playable shoot em up
G384 OTHELLO best PD version
G386 MOUSE IMPOSSIBLE very addictive puzzle
G390 TETREN most polish Tetriz ever release
G392 STRIKEBALL brillant base ball clone
G399 TRAILBLAZER brillant (not A1200)
G400 FIGHTING WARRIOR like street fighter
G404 DOMINOES only one of it kind on PD
G406 TOTAL WARS -strategy like chess in space
G411 BATTLE CAR 2- 3D car racing
G431 NESTER CARD GAME- hours of fun for a quit.
G435 ROULETE american roulete excellent
G436 TRAILBLAZER 2 C64 conversion
G441 E-TYPE 2- very good asteroid great graphic
G443 OLEMPIAD DISK (2D) Olympic sport events
G445 DESCENDER GAME tank, search & desender
G446 OBLIDOX excellent Arcade/Puzzle game
G448 PARACHUTE JOUST quite playable
G455 CASTLE OF DOOM VG graphic adventure.
G460 WIBBLE WORLD GIDDY Large platform game
G467 CASH FRUIT- good fruit machines
G478 AMOS CRICKET cricket games
G488 EXTREAM VLONCE 2 player battle out
G489 ENGIMA MACHINE very challenging puzzle
G490 MEGA BALL 2 very playable break out clone
G491 BOUNCE & BLAST brillant platform 10/10
G492 ZOMBIES & DEFENDER 2 fantastic games
G494 MERCANERY SIMULATION 3D wars games
G499 LIFE -simulation very interesting
G500 TRANSPLANT dozen of level fast arcade.
G501 KLAWZ THE KAT-great platform games
G511 HIGHWAY HELL like SPY HUNTER on the C64
G531 OPERATION FIRESTORMS-brillant
G534 CASTLE KUMQUAT similar to Alien breed
G535 BLACK DAWN brillant graphic adventure
G538 MORIA 5.4 The latest Dungeon & dragon
G539 BRIDGE Good version of bridges
G540 ORK ATTACK bloody adventure

101 GAMES

PRICE ONLY £9.99

Brillant collection of over 100 of the very best of PD games includes INVADER 2, Tetris, Monopoly etc Much too many to list. Very easy to use menu system Most games come with full playing instructions

MUST FOR ANY GAME PLAYER
COMPATIBLE WITH ALL AMIGAS

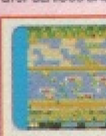


All games are selectable from an easy to use menu & most games come with full playing instructions

G541 REBOUNCE 2 player futuristic breakout
G542 ROAD TO HELL brillant car racing
G544 SUPERTOM CAT New vertical shoot em up.
G545 KUNGFU CHARLIES mix with platform brill.
G546 RAID 4 latest vertical scroll shoot em up
G548 QUIZMASTER very good quiz programe
G552 ELEVATION games base on lift ??
G560 IMPERIAL WALKER -Base on STAR WAR games
G567 STARBASE 13 (2D) Bril like MONKEY ISLAND
G657 AMOS LOADSA MONEY best FRUIT-MACHINES
G659 MR MEN OLYMPIC (2D) many event to complete
G660 4 L.C.D DREAM 4 small hand held games!3
664 NEIGHBOUR GAMES (2D) base on the TV series
G665 TIME RUNNER (WB2/3) Brillant graphic
G667 GOLF (2DISK) One of the first & decent GOLF
G668 AMOS CRICKET 2 New Amos cricket simulator
G669 MUGSY REVENGE gangster graphic adventure
G672 JIGSAW (2DISK) very playable jigsaw games
G673 BOBBY GARDEN + DIGGER (NEW) Brillant
G674 HIGH OCTANE Fast car racing (notwb1.3)
G675 TIME RUNNER amazing graphic adventure
G680 SPACE-INVASION 2 - Fantastic Galaxain
G681 AUTOMOBILES - PD version of SKID MARK bril
G682 BANDIT MANIA - Brillant fruit machine demo
G685 PROJECT BUZZ BAR -Brillant asteroid
G689 GUN FIGHT (not A500(1.3)
G690 THE REAL POPEYE 64 (a500 1.3 only)
G692 SYSTEM DEFEND-Brillant Defender clone
G698 AMIGA-BOY-Game boy emulator + tetriz
G732 DETHELL IN SPACE. Recommed.
G735 OVERLANDER Brillant arcade MOON ALERT
G737 SERIOUS BACKGAMMON The best in PD BG

101 GAMES 2

PRICE ONLY £10.99



This is the very latest all new 101 games compilation pack 2 containing some of the very best in PD games like Zeus, Wonderland, Dragonflies etc. Much too many to list

COMPATIBLE WITH ALL AMIGAS

All games are selectable from an easy to use menu & most games come with full playing instructions

G771 STAR WOID (2 Disk) brillant Thrust
G772 UN-SENSIBLE SOCCER very similar toSensible scoccer games. RECOMMEND
G773 FRUIT MANIA -Brillant Fruit machine.
G774 TRICKLE TREAT -like DOOM on the PC
G775 FOOT-BALL MANAGER-new version
G782 SOLO ASSAULT 3D like Wing Commender
G783 SEED OF DARKNESS-Brillant graphic adven
G784 NANO FLY Superb explore game RECOMMEND
G785 THE GREAT GOLD RAID- very addicted
G787 ANT WAR V1.9 (LATEST) not 1.3
G788 ZENO-MORPH -Great grahic
G789 TASK FORCE very good MIND SHADOW clone
G790 GREEN FIVE Amazing 3D graphic like
G791 PROFFESIONAL BINGO CALLER
G792 MARTIAL SPRIT like Street fighter II
G798 6 EXCELLENT CARD GAMES collection
G809 BLITZ 2 fast action shooting games
G810 EXIT 13 Brillant puzzle
G811 TEMPORAL MISPLACEMENT-graphic adventure
G812 ADAY AT THE RACE-V.Goodhorse racing games
G820 BOULDER ORIGINAL with 80 level
G821 BOULDERDASH cave/level Construction kit
G822 BOULDER COLLECTION 2/3 160 level (2disk)
G839 BOULDER PACK with 540 level on 8 disk
G860 ALIEN NET WORK-new Spacing Invader
G862 BATTLE FORCE excellent text adventure.
G863 GNU CHESS the best chess with 10 level
G866 SWORD OF YIGG Graphic adventure
G867 POWER-TETRIZ for 1 or 2 player
G868 SUPER SMASHING TETRIZ
G870 CHESS II & CHECKER One of the best around must for all CHESS or CHECKER player
G871 GRAVITY FORCE 2 1 or 2 player thrust clone

G872 SCHNEBITZ Commercial quality puzzle games
G875 DELEXE GALA v2.3(new) add new feature &bouns gamme + 2 player RECOMMEND. get it now
G876 THE KRILLIAN INCENDENT like ELITE2/Epic
G878 QUANTUM-Maze colect & escape type games

NEW 101 GAMES PK 3

new 101 pack 3 contains over 100 games. run on all Amigas only £11.99 offer buy any 2 pack together & recieve a free £4 token for use with next order "this offer cannot be used with any other offer current & subject to condition apply

G879 RAG TO RICHES - like MONOPLY
G884 WIPE OUT-mindless blasting gamse
G885 GODZILLA Another shootem up
G886 SUPER MEGA FRUIT- All new Fruit Machine
G888 DRIVING MANIAC 3D (fill vector like Ind500) car racing- very fast. RECOMMEND
G889 PLANET FALL - Luner Lander clone
G891 BUCK TOOTH ADVENTURE Very good multilevel shoot/collect em up RECOMMEND
G892 PENGO 2- Maze type games. Recommend
G893 SUPER OBLITERATION Blast asteroid verysimilar to PANG 2 lot of weapon RECOMMEND
G894 SUPER INVASION II -New SPACING INVADER
G897 THE SHEPERD Brillant POPULUS clone. REC
G898 ALIEN GENOCIDE (2) Shoot aliens set in space.
G899 PUCKMAN. One of the better PacMan arround.
G900 SUPER-BATTLE ZONE 3D (not WB1.3)
G901 M*A*S*H a (ANTWAR 2) play very similar toLEMMING & WORM, with load of Weapon (Brillant)
G904 LAST SOLDIER (2) multilevel platform games
G905 CBBERTECH (2) excilent ALIEN BREED Clone
G906 HANGMAN any one for a game?
G907 ACE SPACE nice Platform games
G908 COLOURMANIA slide/Klatiz type puzzle games
G910 HARRY-HADDOCK- Brillant platformer games
G912 MANGLE FENDER -Brillant, Smash up others/tank ect to win. extremly addicted. get it
G913 ARCADE GAMES CLASSIC Vol 1 & 2 (2d)
G914 HELICOPTER-play like Desert strike
G915 COW WARS. Very addicted 2 player games
G916 ISLAND -Play like Monoply.
G919 COP THE LOT Pro Latest Lottery preditor
G920 LOTTERY PROFFESIONAL This version use
G921 MONOPLY. (board games) The best version
G922 JET WILLY 3 - excelent platform games
G923 FLAMMING ENGINE-Superb car racing
G924 POWER MACHINES. Grahicaly brillant shoot
G925 SUCIDE-MACHINE Operation wolf style
G926 ZAXXON 3D Superb C64 3D blaster games
G927 BOING V3. Great platformer. recommend
G928 PUNTER-Animate horse racing games
G929 ARCADE JIGSAW (2d) include LION KING
G930 WHEEL CHAIR GLADITOR-Very fun to play
G931 NIMBLE-Brillant New arcade puzzle.
G933 BLACK DAWN 3- THE NEW BEGINNING (2) Superb 3D adventure. RECOMMEND
G934 R3 ROCKET (NEW)very good rockets games
G935 BATTLE SHIP- the finest PD version
G936 LAST LAP - Fast car racing

GAME HINTS & CHEATS II

Play your favourite game for ages? but can't get to the end of the level or game? Having problem with some games? 5 disk pack with 1000's of games cheats/ help/level code action replay poke etc should help you finish many games suitable for all Amiga only £4.95 Update & release on 29 July 95

EDUCATION

E001 KID PAINTS. superb paint special for kids
E002 COLOUR IT brillant computer colouring book
E003 TREASURE SEARCH find the hidden treasure.
E004 LEARN & PLAY (not A1200)many maths & games
E005 LEARN & PLAY II more education programes
E006 SPANISH TRANSLATOR Spanish<> English
E008 MR MEN (WB1.3only) brillant story adventure
E009 ASTROMY tutorial on solar/star ect system
E010 SIMON & SPACE MATHS maths & simon games

E011 EDUCATION PACK 1

packed with dozen of education programs ranging from maths, science to educational games recommend suitable for any Amiga. 5 disk pack only £4.95

E011 EDUCATION PACK (5 Disk) pack with lot of ed program ranging from maths to games recommend
E019 DINOSAURS teach you all about Dinosaour
E020 WORLD DATABASE require (2+meg)
E021 STORY LAND II interact puzzle games rec
E022 LANGUAGE TUTOR teach you 4 language
E023 TALKING COLOURING BOOK talking Dpaint bril
E024 EASY SPELL II improve your kid speling
E025 SCRABBLE require 2-4player, brillant
E026 WORDS can help you solve the crossword
E027 OSWALD Very colourful large cartoon game
E030 EVOLUTION breed your own hybrid
E031 IQ TEST + IQ GAMES pack 1 excellent
E033 TYPING TUDOR very good typing tudor

EDUCATION & 21 GAMES pack

Collection of the very best of education program & a 21 games pack, a very popular combination for kids. (run on all Amigas) 5 disk pack only £4.95

E035 CHESS HELPER help/teach how to play
E036 BASIC TUDOR learn about Amiga basic Prog
E038 AMIGA TUTORIAL 7 part tutorial
E039 COMPUTER CARE how to care about AMIGA
E040 GUIDE TO LOWER BACK PAIN tutorial the spine & how to avoid back pain. (recommend)
E041 KID ALPHABET display all alphabet letter
E042 FRACTION & SILQUEST maths & games excellent
E043 MATH MASTER teach/test you more on maths
E044 STEAM ENGINE V2 graphic & tutorial
E045 PETROL ENGINE tutorial & animate graphic
E046 GAS TURBINE ENGINE tutorial & anim graphic
E047 STIRLING ENGINE tutorial & anim graphic
E050 DREAM FOR ANGEL explain the meaning of dream E051 INVISIBLE WORLD brilliant recommend
E052 FISH TANK turn your amiga into a FISHTANK
E054 DEMOLITION MISSION simple game for kid
E055 WORD POWER solve crossword puzzle ect good.
E056 WORM HOLE simple game ideal for children.
E057 APPLE CATCHER catch falling apple brillant
E058 CROSS MAZE & CRYPTOKING 2 excellent kid games E059 VERB QUIZ find the word & it related. Bril
E061 KING JAMES BIBLE (4d) complete bibles excel
E066 TARROT clairvoyant in a instance
E068 GALLOW fancy a games of hang man?
E070 MATH DRILLS teach all basic math skill Vgood
E071 ERROR INFO give info why your amiga crash
E075 WORLD-WAR 2 graphics tutorial on WORLD-WAR releate program eg simulate Starprobe/ molecube/ ect
E076 SCIENCE an excellent collection of science ideal for all who interesting or studies in science recommend. this pack come on 4 disks
E080 KIDPRIX great children paint programme.
E081 ASTROMY PACK. This is a mazing collection of programe relate to astromy. can help to locate certain or star position ect. must for anyone who studies astromy or hobby. great (4DISK)
E073 PICTURE & LETTER learn to read- first step
E074 AMIGA BEGINER GUIDE tutorial on Amigas
E085 NODDY PLAYTIME demo->Very good
E080 KID PIX more excellent paint programes
E081 D.T.P FOR KID easy to use, excellent
E082 SING A RYHMES sing a song
E094 HIGH WAY CODE TUTOR question on highway code E096 READ & LEARN (2D) THREE LITTLE PIGGY Story
E097 BACK TO SKOOL vol 1 collection of the best
E098 BACK TO SKOOL vol 2 in education programe
E099 BACK TO SKOOL vol 3 & games. RECOMMED

E100 LITTLE TRAVELER infomation on world wide
E101 WORLD GEOGRAPHY world with map & text.
E103 DISCOVERY OF THE ATOM tutorial on the Atom (2D) ... DESK TOP GUIDE TO MUSIC(3D) guide & tutorial
E107 TRUMPTY FIREWORK ALPHABET Very entertaining ... teach your child the ALPHABET
E108 HOW TO DELOVOPE PHOTO 1 (2) Excellent
E109 MR MEN OLYMPIC (2D) many event to complete
E110 CULT TV DATABASE (2D) Info on early TV series
E112 HOW TO DELOVOPE PHOTO 2 (2) delevope your ... ELETRONIC WORLDS(3D) Complete KJames BIBLES ... THE EARTH BEGAN-theory how the BIG BANG explode ... all the star & galaxy
E118 WORKBENCH 2 tutorial on Work Bench 2
E119 DINO WAR Quiz on dinosaurs
E120 JUNIOR MATHS Great learning aid for teach kid on the ... subjects. RECOMMEND
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Excellent collection of education programs ideal for ... kids various subjects while retaining the fun & game ... ment. 5 disk only £4.99 or order seperately for only 99p per disk. Order Code KID DISK & no ...

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E123 KID DISK 1- Brillant education pack E124 KID DISK 2- ... education programe
E129 KID DISK 3 (DTP). Drawing program for kid
E142 KID DISK 5 & 6 - 2 disk full of brillant games
E125 JURASSIC PARK lots of info on dinosaurs
E126 CHILDREN SONG 2 contain 5 excellent song
E127 MING SHU (A500 only)Bril Chinese Astrology
E128 ASTRO 22 PRO V3-The latest astrology program that ... calculate the position of the planet, eclipe, zodiac position ect. Recommend
E130 FRENCH VERB TESTER should help you with french. ... CULT TV DATA BASE II (2 DISK) info on early TV
E132 WORLD HISTORY BOOK
E133 LITTLE TRAVELLER II (2) Infomation on world wide
E134 X-FILES-Guide to the TV series very interesting
E148 CHESS & TUTOR - FULLteach you how to play chess ... INTERNET-FULL guide to internet & superhighway
E161 CLI & SHELL TUTOR (help). Ideal for beginner
E162 DELUXE PAINT GRAPHIC TUTOR V 3 & 4 RECOMM...
E163 JAPANESE - teach you the japanese language
E164 PAINT IT (not A5001.3) latest COLOURING BOOK
E165 KEY BOARD TRAINER An excellent tuping tutor
E166 WORD POWER- spellcheck/crossword solver/teach ... CROSSWORD CREATOR-design crossword
E169 CHESS II & TUTOR brillant Chess II games
E170 HISTORY OF AVIATION Vol 1 Execllent disk
E171 CHILD FAVOURITE-Education prog
E172 ANIMAL LAND-Learn about animal
E175 FRANTIC GUIDE TO COMPUTER (2D) brillant & funny ... CYBER PUNK 2 for cyberPunk freak only
E178 STAR-TREK & STARTREK NEXT GERENATION GUIDE must for startrek fan contained 100s of picture from the startrek SERIES. 2
E181 SIGINTURE CREATOR customise your own signiture. ... VIRUS WORKSHOP V4 comprehensive guide
E184 IMAGINES VIDEO 2disk
E186 WORKBENCH 2/3 GUIDE On line help/Complete
E210 LEARN & PLAY 3 Latest Education & Games
E240 BARNEY THE BEAR GOES CAMPING (2d) Brillant teach ... child about animal
E241 COMMS GUIDE V1.1 beginner modem user
E242 GUIDE TO WEATHER (3d) superd complete guide to the weather. recommend
E245 MATH ATTACK- Maths relate games for kids
E242 ANIMAL LAND-Ideal for young kid. Execel
E243 PICTURE-MATHS-Maths program for kids
E246 BEGINER GUIDE TO WB 3 (A1200 only)
E247 GLOBE FACT(2) fact about planet earth
E248 KID ONLY. 6 excellent game to play with
E250 SANTA -Help santa collect present games
E251 BIRTHDAY HISTORY V2.2
E252 BAR TENDER-recipt for 1000 drink/cocktail
E253 BEGINNER TYPING TUTOR

NEW EDUCATION 21 GAMES pack
Latest education pack & new 21 games collection (5 disk packs) only £4.95

WE ALSO STOCK THE ENTIRE COLLECTION OF LSD TOOLS 1-150 SCOPE 1-220 FRED FISH 1-1000 ASSASSIN GAMES 1-200 ETC

CD-ROM Scene

Tony Horgan's selection of CD-ROMs includes the Amiga's newest Interactive Encyclopedia.

Aminet 13





All the latest from the famous Aminet archive comes our way once again on Aminet 13, this time with a special focus on animation. A fully intact, working version of Main Actor is also included. This is an animation tool which can be used to create and edit animations, altering time frames and tagging sounds to specific parts to create synchronised soundtracks. It uses a kind of freeform modular window interface that's designed for screens larger than 640 x 256 pixels, which unfortunately makes for a very cluttered and confused display in a high res, non-interlaced video screen mode.

There's a healthy 800Mb of new software data and the archived format of the CD means there's still room for nearly 300Mb in the 'pix' drawer too, most of which is animations. As always there's the usual stack of software from every corner of the globe in every imaginable category. It wasn't the case until fairly recently, but now one way or another, just about 99% of all freely distributable Amiga software gets uploaded to the Aminet, so what you've got here is an all-encompassing collection of the latest shareware and PD releases, including games, demos, utilities, applications, modules, samples ... Once again, highly recommended.

Available from: Most CD-ROM dealers. Check ads for prices.



90 %

Epic Interactive Encyclopedia

The last time we looked at an encyclopedia CD-ROM was back in our November 1995 issue. The Grolier Encyclopedia was rated at 87% and scored points for its excellent, clear and simple front end and overall presentation.

Apparently that CD has now completely sold out the world over, so Epic Marketing decided to create their own completely new Amiga CD Encyclopedia.

There are three main sections: Encyclopedia, Media Show and Explorapedia.

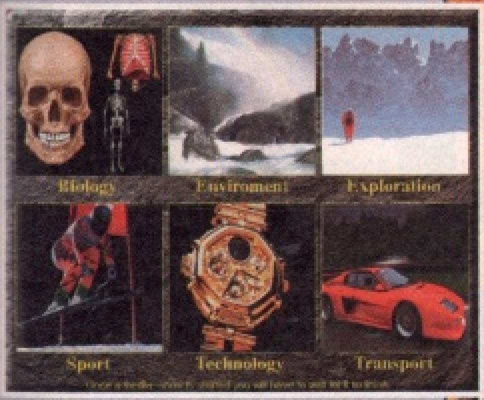
The main Encyclopedia section is controlled from one high res interlaced screen, split into four windows.



All the topics are listed alphabetically in a single index in a window on the left, which can be scrolled with the cursor keys, Pg Up and Pg Down on the keypad or with the pokey little gadgets next to the list. Any items of particular interest can be ticked off on the list and carried over to the Hotlist Editor, where you can make up your own indexes from selected subjects. There's a Search button just beneath the main list which works as a shortcut for locating any subject.

For each subject there is always some text, and certain subjects have a picture (or a series of pictures), a sound sample or a small 'movie clip' animation. Some subjects may have all of these, others might have one or two. However, pictures do not accompany all of the entries – nearly half of the subjects I looked at were text-only affairs, which is a little disappointing. Those that do have pictures tend to be in the nature, science and geography categories. The pictures themselves appear in another window and can normally be viewed as full-screen low resolution grey scale images too.

Film clips appear (very occasionally) in a mini screen in the bottom right corner. These are grey scale animbrushes grabbed





from video and lasting somewhere around three to five seconds.

You can make your Amiga read out the text for any of the subjects by clicking on the Speak button. Unfortunately this uses the Amiga's old speech synthesis feature ... which makes Speak & Spell sound like an elocution teacher! So it's of limited use. The necessary files are installed automatically to allow this feature on more recent Amigas. If you want to use any of the pictures or text (maybe in school projects or suchlike) you can use the Export function to save them to your hard drive or print them out. The rest of the data (anims and sounds) is stored on the CD as standard Amiga files.

Media show

In the Media Show section you can take your pick from six narrated slideshows covering biology, environment, exploration, sport, technology and transport. A well-rounded, rather muffled and monotone voice reads one of six scripts pitched at a kind of upper-primary school level. The narratives are stored as IFF samples rather than CD audio tracks (which would have taken a lot more CD space). The slideshows are in colour with some good pictures.

Finally there's the 'Explorapedia' a section designed for younger kids. There are six areas which can be explored (vehicles, toys, dinosaurs, workshop, music studio and space), each area consisting of a static screen containing a few objects that move and make a sound when clicked on. This is in 'play' mode. If you switch to 'learn' mode, clicking the objects brings up some very basic information about them and cross references to related subjects from the main encyclopedia section.

It's possible to add your own subjects to the main database or update it from extra subject add-ons available from Epic Marketing (either on floppy disk or via the Internet). Additional data is stored on your hard drive (one of the reasons why a hard drive is required to use this CD).

Conclusion

While this is generally a fun and informative package, it does fall down in a few areas. It would certainly be helped by more pictures, animations and sounds. The message "Sorry there is no image for this subject" seems to be displayed far too often. There's only so much room on a CD, but maybe the space taken up by the Media Show section (around 50Mb) would have been put to better use illustrating the main encyclopedia. Both the Media Show and Explorapedia sections are entertaining once, but unlikely to draw you back for repeated viewings.

If you're on the lookout for some interactive reference material then you should find this fits the bill. Care has been taken to ensure you can run a version of the encyclopedia on any hard drive-equipped Amiga with 2Mb of RAM and OS 2 or higher, with an enhanced version on the CD for AGA users which requires 4Mb of RAM.

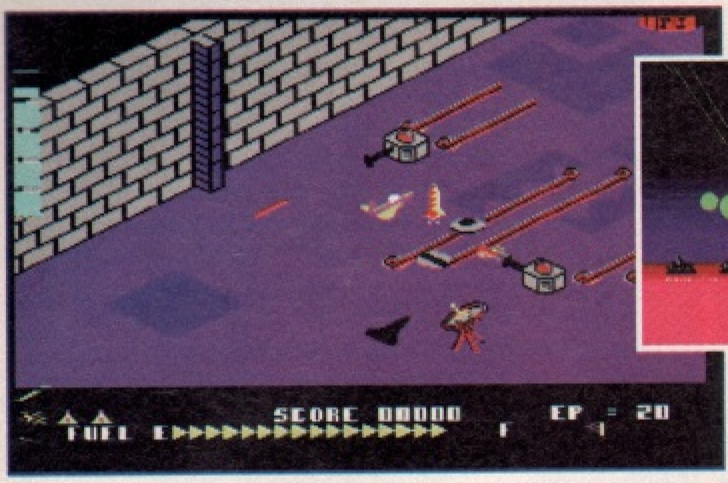
Available from: Epic Marketing, 139 Victoria Road, Swindon, Wilts. Tel: 0500 131 486. Price: £29.99 plus £1 post & packing.

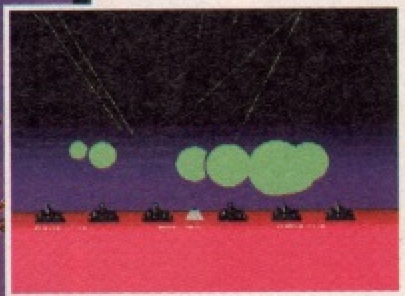




77%

Amiga CD Sensation - Golden Games





Here we go again ... working through a CD full of PD games should be fun. All those 'Golden' games at your fingertips, what could be better? I can think of a few things.

Most PD games have a habit of shutting out your operating system along with any programs that may be running, often with no option to quit back to Workbench. They also have a habit of being either a: incompatible with various Amigas, or b: crap. While any one of these problems in isolation may not be a major hassle for occasional game playing, when you're faced with the task of sifting through 1,000 such games on a CD-ROM things can get a bit messy – you could find yourself sitting through what seems like hours of drawn-out title sequences, system crashes and reboots before you find anything worth playing.

Don't lose heart though, there are some real beauties lurking between the rubbish. These are mostly re-makes of classic coin-ops from the 80s, like the fabulous pixel-perfect Defender clone (with all the original sound effects), Bignonia's unofficial Donkey Kong, Popeye and Zaxxon conversions (sadly Donkey Kong is not AGA compatible), Amoeba Invaders, Boulderdash and the like.

Most of these have been knocking around the scene and various CD compilations for a few years though, so if you've already got a CD-ROM of PD games it's likely you'll have most of them.

There are still some interestingly obscure games to be found, like the 'Pepsi-sponsored' one in which you attempt to catch leaping trout in a net whilst standing in a river in Ireland. I can tell you're excited already.

Fans of the long-forgotten genre of the text adventure will find plenty to get stuck into.

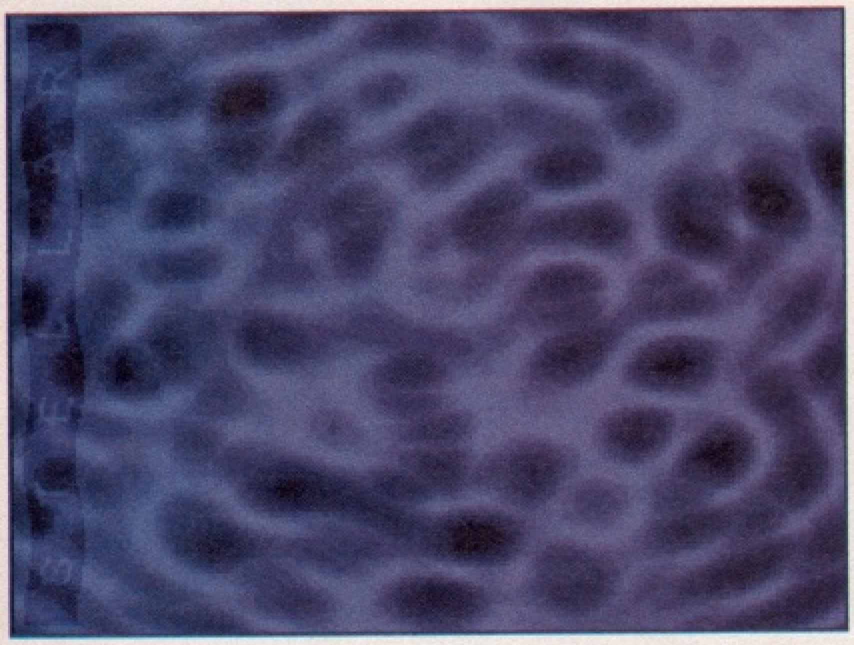
Once you've endured the long process of identifying which games are good you'll probably end up with a core of around a dozen gems. Just don't expect 1,000 quality games!

Available from: GTI, Carl-Zeiss-Strasse 9, D-79761 Waldshut, Tiengen, Germany.



60 %

Amiga CD Sensation - Demos R 4 Ever



From the compilers of the Golden Games CD, Demos R 4 Ever aims to bring the best of the Amiga demo scene to you on one CD. With demos dating back as far as 1992 (and possibly further) it's not a cross section of the current scene but a kind of edited highlights package. That's not to say it has all the best demos from the last few years. Tracking down some of the classics from the recent and distant past is not always fruitful, but you couldn't criticise the CD for its omissions when there are so many that have been included (almost 2,200 in fact).

The demos are all uncompressed and come with readme files that advise on the system requirements. To say they are all 'ready to run' from the CD might be rather generous – ready to crash would be more realistic.

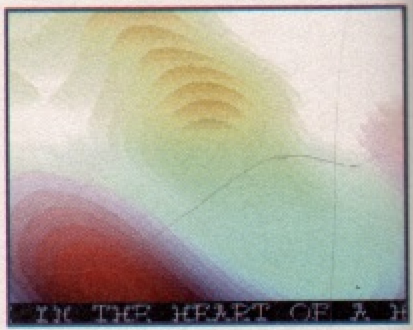


As with the Golden Games CD, casual browsing of the contents leads to countless crashes and lock-ups. If you take time to check all the readme files before attempting to run anything then you shouldn't have too much bother, but after a while that becomes a chore you could do without. A better system is employed on the Spaceballs Scene Storm CD, which pops up a little requester whenever you click a demo's icon, telling you its requirements and whether it will exit, giving you the choice to go ahead and run it or to abort before you lock up the machine.

If you're a demo fan but you're not connected to the Internet, this is an excellent way to catch up on many of the top demos you'll have seen covered in our PD Scene section over the years. Finding a particular demo is made fairly easy so long as you know the name of the group that made it, as they're stored alphabetically according to their creators. A search tool would be useful for locating demos by their title.

Although this suffers many of the problems encountered with the Golden Games disc, generally the quality of the content is higher. When they work they're good examples of what's out there on the demo scene.

Available from: GTI, Carl-Zeiss-Strasse 9, D-79761 Waldshut, Tiengen, Germany.



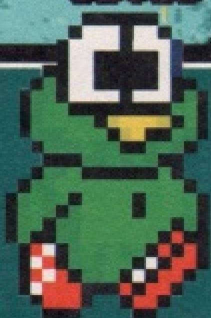
68 %

PD Scene

A selection of games have risen above the rest of the PD scene offerings this month. Tony Horgan is your cheap thrills guide.

Birdie
game





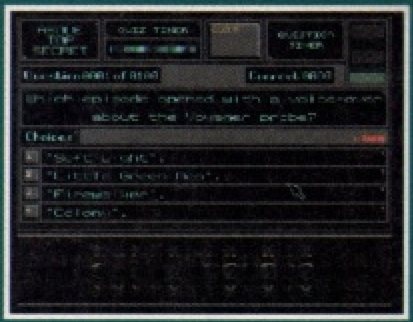
DIY platform games are popular this month. Along with Quicksilva we've got this one, another short taster of a cheap mail order game. It's based on an old concept that spawned a commercial game a few years ago, in which you controlled a little car driving along a series of platforms, colouring them in as you went until the whole level was recoloured. Give yourself five trainspotter points if you can remember what it was called (no, please don't write in!). Birdie replaces the car with a sickeningly cute Orville the Duck type of character (whatever happened to him?), but apart from that it's business as usual. This version is a bit more challenging than the aforementioned commercial version with faster gameplay and more nasties to avoid, which is no bad thing, as you could have played the original (the name of which I still can't remember) through to the end with your eyes closed.

Birdie won't set the world alight but it could keep the younger members of the family amused for a while. If you like it a lot you can send off for the full game from the author. If you don't like it you've got yourself a blank disk for under £1.50 including post and packing, so what have you got to lose?

Available from: Hornesoft PD, 23 Stanwell Close, Wincobank, Sheffield, S9 1PZ. Price: £65p plus 70p p+p.

78 %

Above Top Secret
quiz



Here's a disk for anyone who thinks they're a bit of an expert on TV and movie sci-fi. It's a quiz with question sets based on Alien, Bladerunner, Doctor Who, Red Dwarf, Star Wars and The X-Files. It's been compiled with the Q-Whizz quiz engine, which leads to a neat interface which is clear and easy to use, even if it is a bit laboured at times. Casual fans will probably find it quite challenging, while real anoraks will no-doubt revel in answering every question correctly. Either way it should provide plenty of chin-stroking fun for anyone who wears Star Trek pyjamas at night. It's licenceware by the way, not PD.

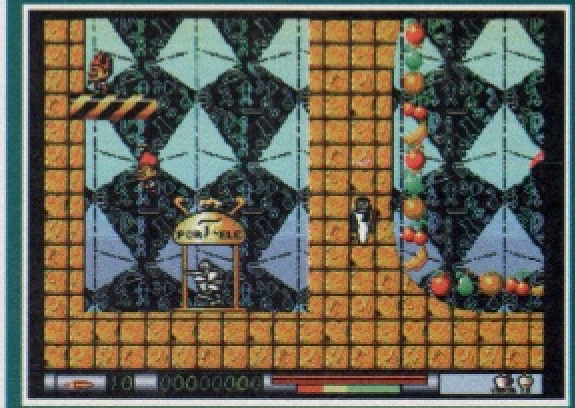
Available from: F1 Licenceware, 31 Wellington Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 9DU. Tel: 01392 493 580. Price: £3.99 plus 75p p+p.

81 %

Quicksilva
game

Definitely one of the better games to have emerged from the PD scene lately, Quicksilver is a demo version of a colourful platform game featuring a dumpy little android as its main character. The fast parallax scrolling is impressive, but actually too fast on a 68030-based A1200. Some kind of compensation for faster machines needs to be implemented, because as it is, it's almost unplayable on such a system. That's good news for anyone with a slower Amiga though, as it shouldn't have any trouble keeping up running on less powerful CPUs.

If you're into garish backdrops in the style of the James Pond games you'll get along just fine, but don't expect the gameplay to match that of the famed fishy series. It's fairly simply run, jump and shoot action with the usual pick-ups and baddies along the way. Nothing out of the ordinary but a good bit of fun anyway.

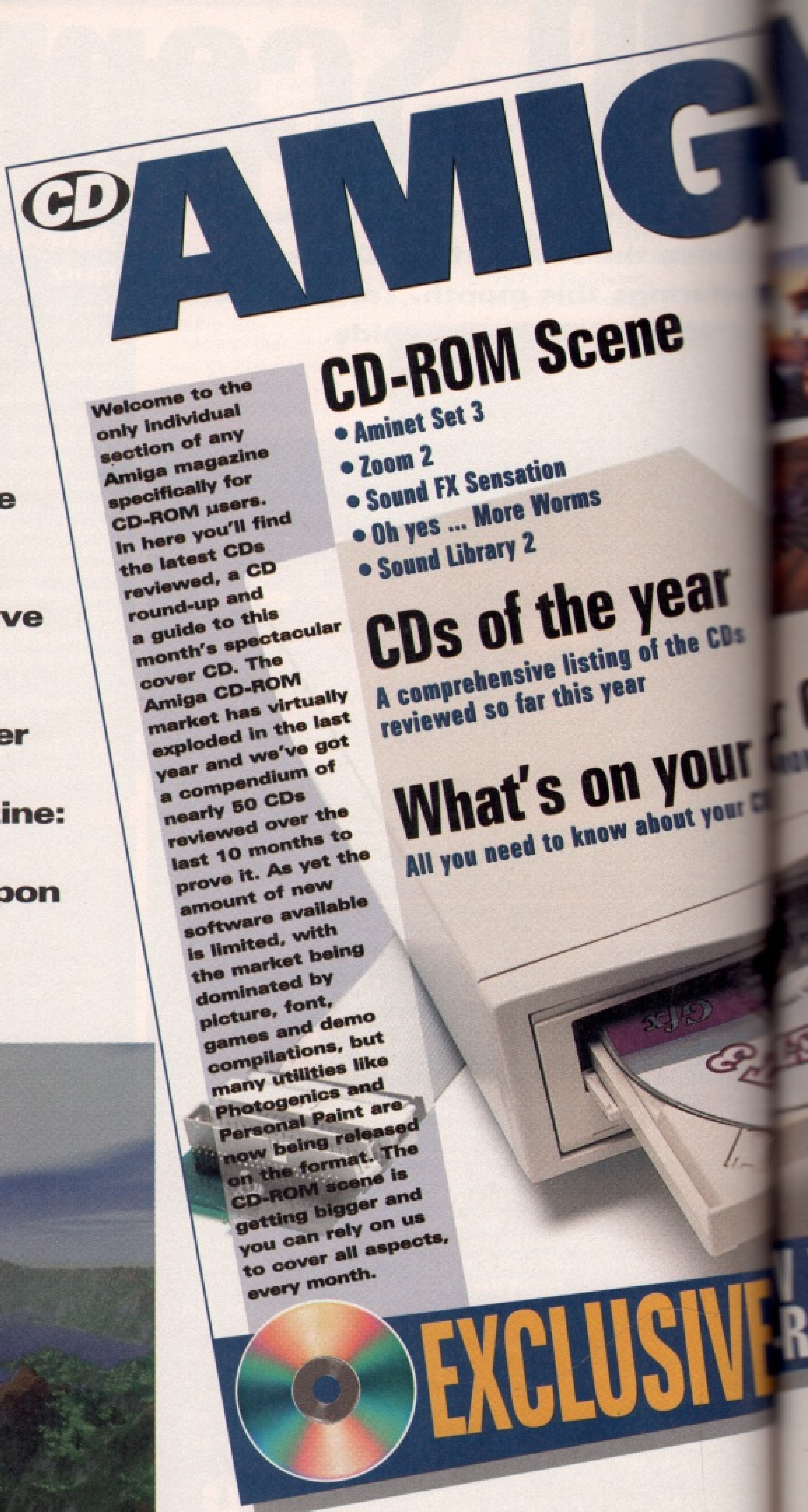


Available from: Hornesoft PD, 23 Stanwell Close, Wincobank, Sheffield, S9 1PZ. Price: £65p plus 70p p+p.

80 %

From the November 1996 issue of CU Amiga Magazine we will be cover mounting a CD and incorporating the CD Amiga section permanently. As a bonus we'll have a top FULL utility on CD next month too ... but don't worry, if you haven't got a CD-ROM drive we haven't forgotten you. As usual the disks on the regular issue will have the best game demo in the world and an exclusive FULL utility as well.

So don't miss out on either the CD or the floppy disk issue of CU Amiga Magazine: place an order with your newsagent using the coupon opposite right now!


CD AMIG

CD-ROM Scene
• Aminet Set 3
• Zoom 2
• Sound FX Sensation
• Oh yes ... More Worms
• Sound Library 2

CDs of the year
A comprehensive listing of the CDs reviewed so far this year

What's on your
All you need to know about your CD

Welcome to the only individual section of any Amiga magazine specifically for CD-ROM users. In here you'll find the latest CDs reviewed, a CD round-up and a guide to this month's spectacular cover CD. The Amiga CD-ROM market has virtually exploded in the last year and we've got a compendium of nearly 50 CDs reviewed over the last 10 months to prove it. As yet the amount of new software available is limited, with the market being dominated by picture, font, games and demo compilations, but many utilities like Photogenics and Personal Paint are now being released on the format. The CD-ROM scene is getting bigger and you can rely on us to cover all aspects, every month.

EXCLUSIVE







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CU AMIGA MAGAZINE

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SO YA NOTICED THE AD, WHADDYA WANT, A MEDAL.............

HELLO FOR ANOTHER MONTH. THAT WAS A BIT BORING, WASN'T IT, ERM LET'S TRY AGAIN. HIYA HIYA HIYA EVERY MAN JACK O' YA! THAT'S BETTER! OK, LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSI-NESS, YOU ARE FLICKING THROUGH THIS ULLUSTRIOUS MAG, LOOKING FOR SOME PD ACTION. WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE TO FIND SUCH AN ARTICLE? HERE, OF COURSE! AND THAT'S WHY WE'RE IAT PD COMPANY OF THE YEAR 1996. YOU DON'T GET THAT FROM SITTING AROUND ALL DAY, YOU GET IT FROM BEING THE FASTEST, CHEAPEST AND GOSH-DARNED BEST PD LIBRARY IN THE WORLD.

SO WHAT MAKES OL V12 THE BEST?

* THE LOWEST PRICES IN THIS MAGAZINE BY A VERY LONG WAY, DON'TS TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, LOOK AROUND, EVEN THE TINY ADS AT THE BACK AREN'T CHEAPER.
* 24 HOUR TURNAROUND, WITH OUR TURBO POWERED PD WE ALWAYS OUTSTRIP THE COMPETITION FOR SPEED. WE'RE NOT CALLED V12 FOR NOTHING!
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* UNDENIABLY THE BEST CATDISK IN THE WORLD. THERE QUITE SIMPLY ISN'T A CATDISK THAT HAS HAD SO MUCH TIME SPENT ON IT. SORRY, BUT PERFECTION WAS DEMANDED IN A CATDISK AND WE BELIEVE WE'VE GOT AS CLOSE AS IT'S POSSIBLE TO DO WITHOUT LOOKING INHUMANLY SMUG ALL YOUR LIFE. AND IT'S FREE. SO GET ONE, MISTER.
* MORE WORLDWIDE SWAPPING CONTACTS THAN YOU COULD IMAGINE, PD COMES IN FROM DOZENS OF LOCATIONS ON EVERY CONTINENT (EXCEPT ANTARCTICA, CURIOUSLY.....) THIS MEANS MORE EXCLUSIVE PD THAN YOU'VE EVER SEEN! AND ALL AT 50P EH, I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW IT'S DONE....).
* FRIENDLIER SERVICE THAN YOU COULD EVER DARE TO EXPECT. NO QUIBBLES RETURN POLICY GUARANTEED, AND THAT'S A PROMISE.

HERE'S OUR REVISED PRICES, AS MANY OF YOU WANTED BULK DISCOUNTS, NOW YOU'VE GOT THEM! AIN'T WE NICE..... AMAZINGLY, WE SUPPLY THE DISKS ON THESE PRICES TOO, THIS IS WHY WE'RE VOTED NUMBER ONE AND NOT SOME RIPOFF 1-3 QUID A DISK COMPANY. HURRAH!

30P

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SO NOW WE'RE THE BEST WE CAN FLAUNT OUR UNDOUBTED SUPERIORITY AND SIMPLY LOOK EXTREMELY SMUG WITH OURSELVES ALL DAY, WRONG! WE WANT TO KEEP THE TITLE AND WORK LIKE LITTLE SQUIRRELS OR OTHER HARD WORKING LITTLE FLUFFY MAMMALS TO KEEP IT! PRICES CONTINUE TO BE LETHALLY LOW, 24 HR TURNAROUND IS NOW GUARANTEED OR YOU GET FREE DISKS FOR EVERY DAY'S DELAY (!), AND NEW TITLES KEEP COMING (OO-ER) IN THE CATDISK. THERE'S NOONE BETTER THAN US, IT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE I'M AFRAID....

AND A MESSAGE TO ALL WORKBENCH 1.3 USERS, WE STILL SUPPORT YOUR SYSTEM AND HAVE THE LARGEST 1.3 COLLECTION IN THE WORLD, OUR CATDISK WORKS FINE FROM SCRATCH ON 1.3, SO GIVE THE OLD FRIEND A BOOT WITH SOME NEW EXCITEMENT! OR COURSE, WB2 AND AGA AMIGA OWNERS ARE SUPPORTED BETTER THAN A PIG ON STILTS TOO, EVERYONE'S WELCOME, EVERYONE'S CATERED FOR. GOR BLIMEY GAV'NA, GET ON THE V12 LURVE TRAIN AND GO TO HEAVEN!

AND OF COURSE, THE FIRST STEP INTO V12 PALACE (TAKE THE 12TH TURN OFF FROM THE M180) IS THE CATDISKS. WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A CATDISK, COS IT'S LIKELY WE WILL HAVE INCORPORATED IT INTO THIS BALLISTIC LITTLE DOUBLE BARRELLED BABY! OVER 45,000 LINES OF TEXT, IT WILL AUTOMATICALLY DETECT WHAT MODEL OF AMIGA IT IS IN AND CHANGE AS IT BOOTS TO USE THE SYSTEM TO BEST EFFECT, HAVE A HD AND WANT TO INSTALL BOTH DISKS TO IT? NO PROBLEM, IT'S ONLY ONE MOUSE CLICK AWAY, AS WELL AS ANOTHER ICON TO REMOVE IT ALL TOO! DON'T HAVE A HD BUT WANT TO INSTALL IT TO RAM INSTEAD? NO PROBLEM EITHER, OPTIONAL RAM INSTALLATION FOR OVER 1500% SPEED INCREASE, AND ALL IN 1.5 MEG OF RAM (CHIP OR FAST)! HAVE THE STANDARD 1 MEG AND WANT TO RUN IT COMBINED FROM RAM AND FLOPPY? NO PROBLEM EITHER!! IT WILL INSTALL CERTAIN REGULARLY USED PARTS OF THE CAT FOR A 100% INCREASE IN SPEED! A MOUSE DRIVEN INTERFACE, ANIMATIONS, MUSIC, PICS, STILL HIRES LACED GRAPHICS (EVEN ON AN A500!) AND THE HUMOUROUS LISTINGS THAT WE ARE WELL KNOWN FOR. OH GO ON, SEND FOR IT. IT'S GOT GAMES TOO NOW!!!!

FOR A CATDISK, RING THE NUMBER ABOVE, OR WRITE AND ASK. IT'S FREE THIS MONTH SO GET IT AND START SEEING HOW A PD COMPANY SHOULD BE! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO LOOSE? WE DON'T BITE YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'RE LOOKING

ANYWAY, THAT'S ABOUT ALL V12 HAS TO SAY THIS MONTH, EXCEPT HAVE ANOTHER HAPPY AMIGA'ING MONTH, AND NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS WE WILL ALWAYS SUPPLY FLOPPY PD TO THE CUSTOMERS THAT WANT IT, WE WON'T FOLLOW EVERONE OFF TO CD ONLY LAND, SO DON'T WORRY. YOU'LL ALWAYS HAVE SOMEONE LOOKING AFTER YOUR NEEDS.

GREETS FOR THIS MONTH GO OUT TO WOLFMAN, TOPDOG, FREAK AND BUDDA OF NFA, ICEMAN OF CARNAGE, ICON OF LSD, MR SPOON, MICHAEL CARTER, JOHNNY 5, STEFAN MAN-SIER, THE BEYOND THE FRONTIER CREW (HI), ROB DAVAIU, RIGSBY, GUNTERHEIM SUPPLIES, MADONNA, KYLIE, DANNI, BERNIE, JACOB GRIZZLY, BENTLEY BELISHA AND FRILLY MIDGE, AND ALL THOSE PEOPLE WE'VE TYPICALLY FORGOTTEN.

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PD Utilities

public domain

Anthony Brice wades knee-deep through an ocean of PD Utilities and nets a powerful Email manager, a HTML converter, a superlative Electronic FiloFax and lots more in this month's bumper catch.

Epoch Voyager

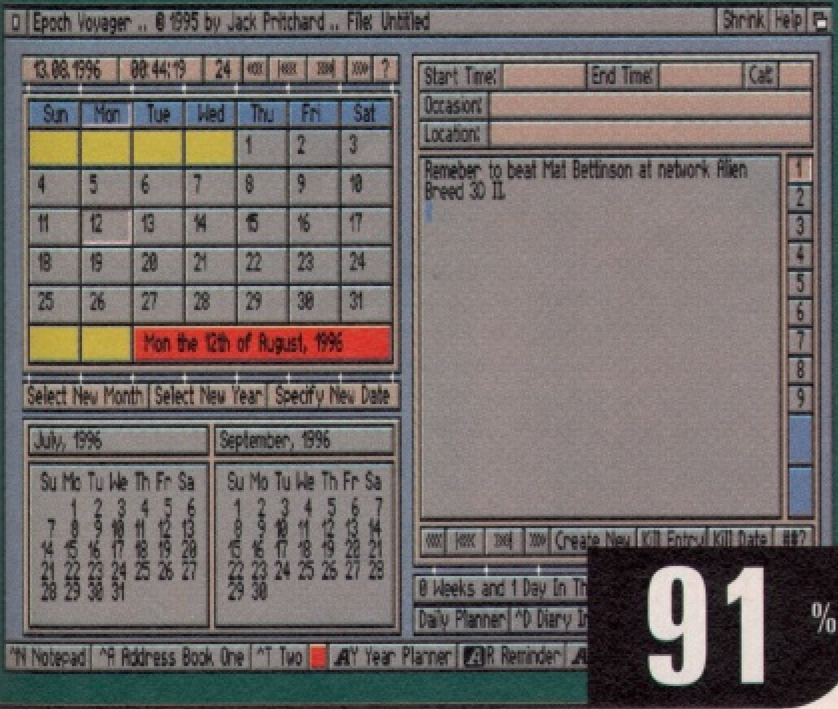
Electronic Filofax

In the beginning there was Epoch Professional then Epoch Master. Even then, author Jack Pritchard was not happy, so for the final part of this trilogy (unless he creates another version) we have Epoch Voyager. Jack states that he started from scratch to create this new organiser and there have been lots of improvements made over all of its earlier incarnations.

For those who've never had the benefit of coming across the Epoch series before, what you have is a superbly presented electronic equivalent of a Filofax, with capacity limited only by the amount of memory you have. You have the usual features within this self-contained package; a calendar, diary, clock with alarm, address book and anniversary list amongst others, all presented in the author's custom GUI interface, which is very well designed and easy to navigate around, even if it is a little too Windows '95 for my liking.

It's a shareware program though folks, so you won't get all the features in the evaluation version and number of records is limited to 20 or so. But the price of purchasing a full version is only £15 and in this case you get more than what you pay for. Of particular note is the excellent search facilities and configuration aspects in this program. With on-line help and 'dock' windows for easy navigation, it seems the author really has thought of everything. Highly recommended.

Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335.

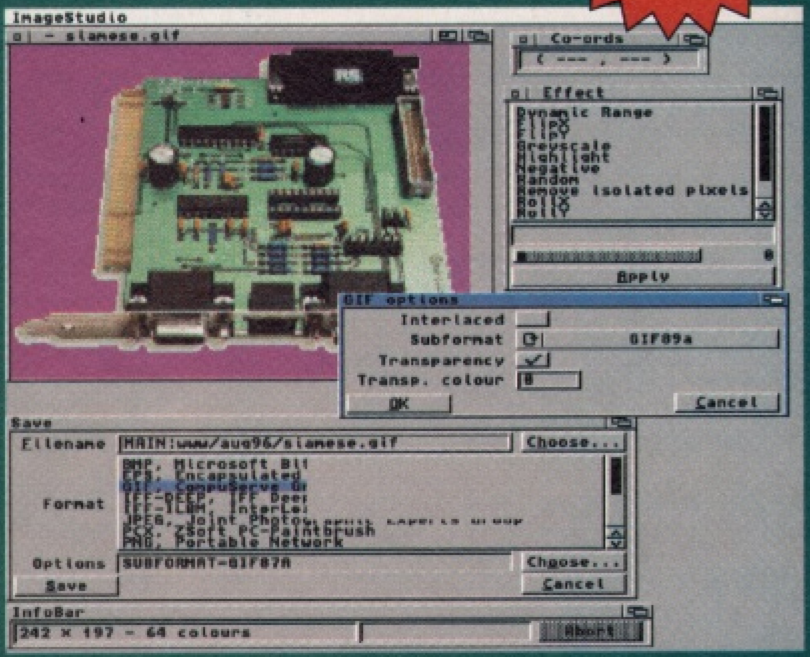


91 %

Vark 13 disk

utility compilation

Utility of the Month



The Vark series of PD disks has become pretty popular over the last couple of years and number 13 should be no exception. Vark is an Amiga fan who releases regular additions to the Vark Utils disk series made up from the latest and best tools that appear on the PD scene. This one, due to popular demand according to his note on the disk, has been compiled with Workbench users in mind. Each program has associated icons, along with the relevant documentation in its own directory (unlike some Shell-only utility disks).

The many tools on the disk include a boot screen that displays system information, a conversion tool for changing AmigaGuide files to ASCII, BlitzDMS (the best front end for DMS), a tool for scanning how much space a directory takes up on a volume, a GUI for configuring AmiTCP that uses the wonderful MuiRexx extension library and the official replacement hard drive installer tool from Amiga Technologies.

As always, there's something for everyone on these disks and even a disk error couldn't stop me enthusing about how good Vark's efforts are in compiling these gems. Needless to say these programs are all credited to the original authors and are all freely distributable or shareware.

Available from: Roberta Smith DTP, 190 Falloden Way, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6JE. Tel: 0181 455 1626.

91 %

DiskSqueeze
disk compressor



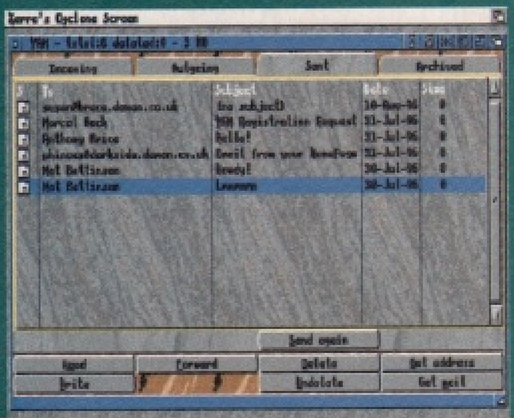
DiskSqueeze could become the floppy disk archive format of the future – even replacing DMS! It can handle DOS and non-DOS track formats so you are able to compress just about any Amiga disk. Also, the archives are much smaller than you would get from using DMS. There are options for adding file_id.diz lines (popular with a lot of bulletin boards) and banner files which can tell you about the file without it having to be unpacked. The test option checks if the archive is compressed OK as well. Support for multiple devices are available, so you could compress archives on a virtual device such as RAD: and similar products.

This program's strong point is user friendliness. The install script is very well written and includes a check program which you can run after installation to scan your system, checking that required files are present and environment labels are set. One criticism is that so many external files are needed as well as the main script. However, this is negated by the excellent installer, so it's not a problem once you have it installed on your system. The author also promises significant new features for version 2, such as a front end GUI rather than a button bar.

85 %

Available from Aminet Path: util/arc

Yam 1.3
Email manager



Yet Another Mailer, Yam is a powerful MUI application used for the reading, writing and storage of Email. There are also direct tools built in for transferring mail between Yam and your mail server, including options to write and spool out messages off-line ready for transfer if you next link up. You can also use it to import mail packets that have been transferred by the SMTP protocol (used by most AmiTCP users) which is handy if you to test Yam without messing up your current system. The front-end is fully configurable and the on-line help system is both user friendly and clearly laid out. One small criticism to make is the lack of an option to archive mail you've written yourself. But it's a small price to pay for something as powerful as Yam. And speaking of price, here's the best part: Yam is totally freeware. Registration costs you just the price of an Email. So, there's no excuse whatsoever for not registering the program.

87 %

Available from Aminet Path: comm/mail

MinBar
GUI for launching programs.



Yet another program designed to launch programs via a GUI on Workbench. So what does MinBar offer that the other's don't? To start, we have options for multiple lists. This is handled via different preferences files so the number of programs you can have available on the launchpad GUI is limitless. Also, raising it above the likes of ToolsDaemon, you have four different ways to launch a task via MinBar: Workbench Tool, CLI DOS command, ARexx Script, or Link. The main GUI is an AppWindow so you can drop programs into it while searching through your hard drive. MinBar also has deeper advanced options, designed primarily for running games, where you can disable CPU caches, reset the display and reset the VBR (vertical blank register) between Chip and Fast RAM. ToolsDaemon is no longer supported and ToolsManager is a huge program which can be very tricky to set up for beginners. In contrast MinBar is one executable file with the prefs system built in and very economic on the memory, apart from the MUI overhead if you use that version. The author has also promised continued support.

A comprehensive tool, which, while fiddly to use until you've got used to it and read the manual properly, has significant improvements over similar programs and is also totally free! Registration is via an Email message to the author who will then send a free keyfile. On-line registration is also now available via the author's web site, which is a great idea. Just point your web browser at http://www.eateggs.demon.co.uk and follow the links.

84 %

Available from Aminet Path: util/wb

RDAG2HTML v1.6
AmigaGuide - HTML converter.

RDAG2HTML is an ARexx script that will convert your old AmigaGuide documents into HTML format. Despite the name it's a decent utility. Get the name right when you want to download it yourself, as it's quite a powerful tool and certainly one that could prove handy if you're into HTML design. No program is going to be able to do it all for you, but RDAG2HTML does a fair job. It includes support for creating single pages, or multiple part output files (which means HTML browsers would load each page a little quicker) as well as in-built images for certain icons such as main page, next and previous buttons etc, which because it's an ARexx script, you are able to customise. Background images are also catered for, as well as custom header and footer files. It will also handle the conversion of nodenames to MSDos format for PC browsers. RDAG2HTML is public domain.

78 %

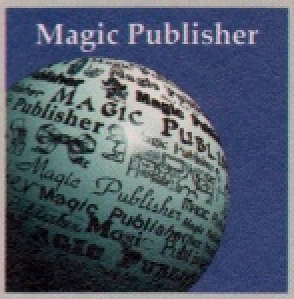
Available from Aminet Path: text/hyper

...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-ROM...CD-R



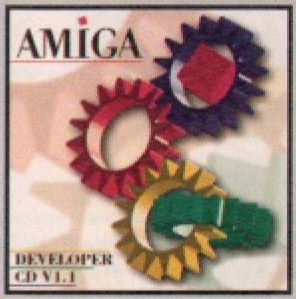
Workbench Add-On Volume 1

The Workbench Add-On CD-ROM is the ideal companion to your workbench. On this CD you will not only find the best programs, that are available for the Amiga, but you will also get them ready-to-run from the CD. In addition to this there is an installer script that installs the desired programs to your harddisk.
The CD covers all areas of interest, all, the programmer, the user, the creative and the gamer will find what they are looking for. On this CD-ROM there are many shareware programs, some of them at a special price, if you get registered. There is e.g. Shapeshifter for 40.- DM (instead of 50.- DM), in addition to this there is a 30 MB Mac partition, so that you can start playing around with Mac applications right away. Then there is PowerPlayer for 20.- DM (instead of 30.- DM), there are, of course, loads of modules with it, so that you can try it right away. AmiWin, the new X11-server for the Amiga is available for $40, instead of $50. You can so ve more than 100.- DM with this CD. Therefore you only have to send in the appropriate page in the booklet to the author of the program. £24.95



Magic Publisher

On this unique CD-ROM Set you will find all you need to create nice looking documents. If you want to write a book, if you want to design a poster, if you want to create WWW-Pages for the Internet or layout a magazine, all you need you will find on this marvelous CD-ROM. There are more than 10.000 Fonts (Colour Fonts, Bitmap Fonts, IFF-Fonts, Adobe Fonts, IntelliFonts, Truetype Fonts and DMF Fonts), more than 5.000 cliparts and 150 printer drivers. Many of these are exclusive to Magic Publisher. You will also find a complete installation of PasTex (more than 300 MB), containing all its fonts (upto 600x600 dpi). In order to create good looking documents, there is Final Writer 4 SE and Wordworth 4 TD. Both rated as the best word processors on the Amiga. For creating good looking Internet-WWW-Documents there are all available Free/ Shareware programs for the Amiga, including many backgrounds and special clipart for this purpose. The 100+ pages booklet contains printouts of all fonts and clipart. Aspecial BBS section is also provided. £49.95



Amiga Developer CD v1.1

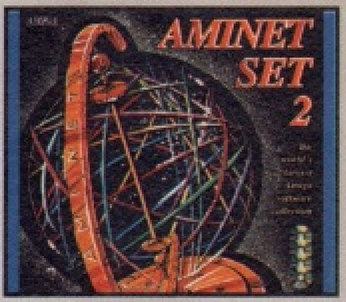
The official developer CD from Amiga Technologies contains all the material you need to start developing software forAmiga computers. This includes: The CD32 developer package. In addition to the original five disk set distribution you will find the "Build-CD" CD writer package Packages contributed by 3rd parties: The WBPath and ActionFSSM packages, courtesy of Ralph Babel; The Envoy v2.0 developer kit, courtesy of IAM, Inc.; The INet 225 developer kit, version 2, courtesy of Interworks, Inc.; The Kickometer package, courtesy of Angela Schmidt; The Enforcer v37.64, courtesy of Mike Sinz. Information in support of forthcoming operating system developments. Additional developer material: BOOPSI gadget and image classes; The AmigaOS 2.04 example code, as part of the original 2.04 Native Developer Kit; The RKM 2.04 code examples; The complete set of registered IFF forms; IFF example and stress test files; All IFF packages released by Commodore-Amiga, Inc., covering 1986 through 1992; The camd v37.1 MIDI developer kit; The SANA-II standard package and developer kit; The Installer v43.1 package. International support material: Sample text using the full ISO-8859-1 character set; Translation guidelines. The updated 3.1 Native Developer Kit: "C" and assembly language header files, linker and runtime libraries; System documentation and tutorial texts; Example code covering the Amiga OS 3.0 and 3.1 features; The NewIFF v39 package; The AmigaGuide and DataTypes documentation and example code. Reference material: The collection of AmigaGuide Volume 1 articles, covering Spring 1987 through January/February 1989; The complete AmigaGuide Volume 2 articles in AmigaGuide format, covering January/February 1990 through March/April 1993; also included are the printable issues in PostScript and PageStream format; Hardware related articles; The Includes & Autodocs in AmigaGuide format. £14.95

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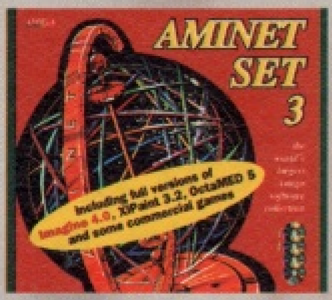
Aminet Set 1

Aminet is the world´s largest collection of freely distributable Amiga software. Up to 10.000 users access the vast archives ervery day and countless programmers publish directly via Aminet. Until recently access to Aminet was restricted to international network users. With Aminet Set 1, consisting of 4 CDs, the complete archive is published the first time. This CD-ROM-collection, which is dated January 1995, offers an almost inexhaustible reservoir of top-value Shareware. A wide variety of programs is included: Applications, Games, Demos, Pictures, Mods, Animations, Developer-Material, ... It contains approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 12.500 archives and you will enjoy the comfortable user-interface. £29.95



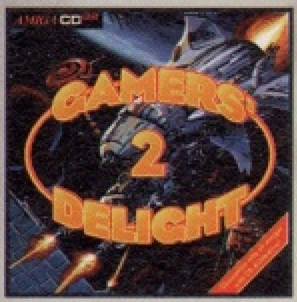
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AMINET SET 2, dated November 1995, consists of approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 12.000 archives. Whether you like applications, games, communications or programming, the SET gives you all you need. Easy to use index files and search facilities make accessing it a pleasure. £34.95



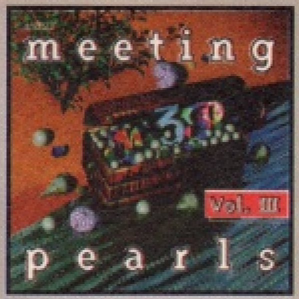
Aminet Set 3

AMINET SET 3, dated July 1996, consists of approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 9.000 archives. Also included are full versions of Imagine 4.0, XiPaint 3.2, OctaMED 5.0 and some commercial games. Whether you like applications, games, communications or programming, the SET gives you all you need. 95 MB Utilities, 79 MB Documents, 408 MB text software, 12 MB Disk/HD tools, 7 MB Hardware related, 756 MB Pictures & Animations, 208 MB Graphics software, 394 MB Graphics & sound demos, 563 MB Games, 64 MB Miscellaneous, 685 MB Music modules, 28 MB Music software, 131 MB Communications, 91 MB Development Software, 88 MB Business software. Easy to use index files and search facilities make accessing it a pleasure. £39.95



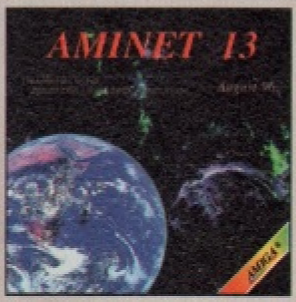
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This CD contains 1070 games for the Commodore Amiga from differing categories. Action, Jump & Run, Card Games, Puzzles, Strategy Games - a whole range of computer entertainment awaits! Gamers' Delight will hold you captivated for hours and guarantees long-lasting pleasure. 70 games are commercial versions - no public domain & no demos! This CD can be run on any Amiga with CD-ROM drive,1 MB free memory and Joystick/Joypad. £26.95



Meeting Pearls Vol. III

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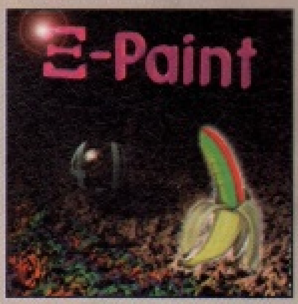
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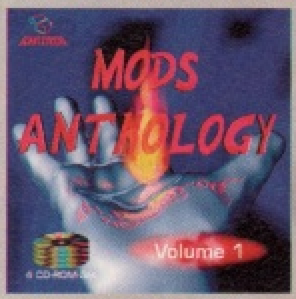
Aminet 14

Aminet CD 14, dated October 1996, consists of approximately 1,1 gigabytes of software in 2400 archives. Since the release of Aminet CD 13 more than 750 MB new software has appeared. User friendly access software makes the Aminet CD 14 a pleasure to use. £14.95



XiPaint V4

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NetNews Offline Vol. 1

NetNews Offline Vol. 1 is the first disk of a new bimonthly published series of Amiga CD-ROMs which contains all Amiga-related newsgroups from the internet. Every volume features about 50.000 articles which contain hot rumours, important information about all aspects of the Amiga, press-releases, discussions and flame wars, ... A newsreader is included. NetNews Offline is the cheap alternative of getting in touch with Usenet. £14.95

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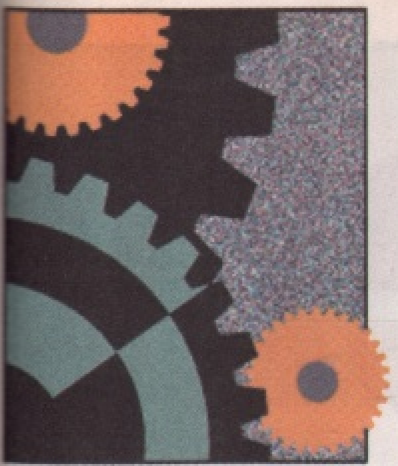
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AmigaWorkshop



Welcome to the part of the magazine where people turn to first for help, advice and information on everything from Comms through to the internal workings of your Amiga.

76 Art Gallery

The top quality artwork continues. If you want to see your work published and maybe get a job as a result, send it in now.

86 Comms

Saving time and space is on the agenda for this month's guide to creating your pages on the Net.

88 Net God

The latest information on what is going on in the global wired world. Remember – you read it here first.

90 Masterclass

Never judge a book by its cover. This time we're going deep into Workbench to find out what all those 'hidden' files do.

92 FAQ

Getting PC and Mac software to work on your Amiga is simple. And it will be even easier once you've read this FAQ on it.

98 Q&A

It's general hospital time for all those broken Amigas. Doctor Horgan and Nurse Bettinson are on hand with the bandages.

100 Points of View

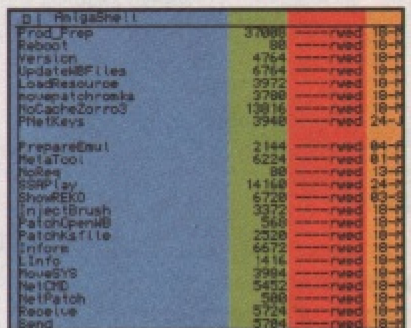
Someone with an opinion is better than someone who couldn't care less. These pages are home to all those who care about the Amiga.

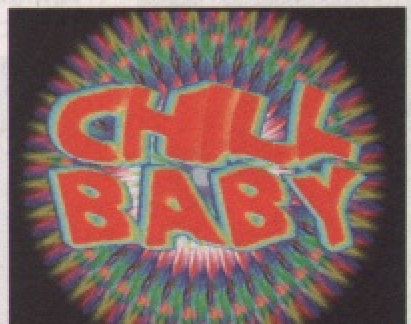
102 Backchat

A Spanish reader fills us in where our Euroscene feature left off, readers reply to Mr Wilson and lots more in our monthly forum.



Art Gallery p76


Masterclass p90



Graphics Masterclass p98

Tutorials

78 Imagine 4.0

Independence Day has nothing on the aliens in this tutorial. Well, maybe not but you can have a darn good try at getting close with Imagine's superb lighting effects.

82 EasyCalc

Invoices receive the EasyCalc treatment: how to get them looking tidy whilst all the complicated bits go on in the background.

84 Graphics Masterclass

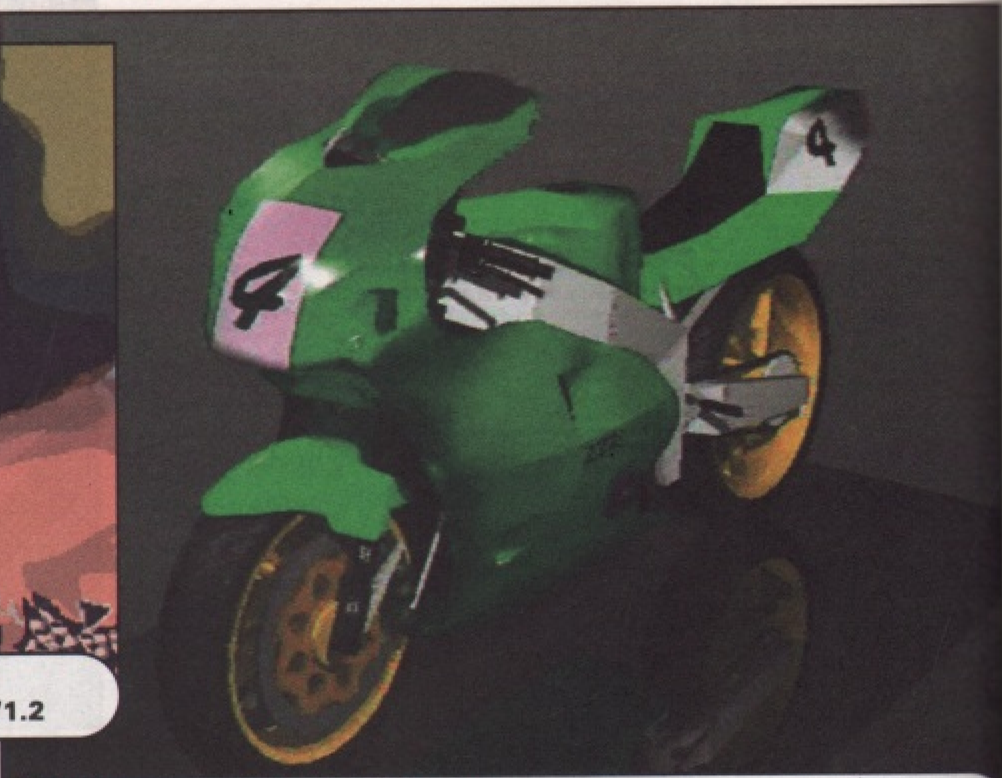
We've gone all alternative this month as look at other ways of using some of the processes in ImageFX.

Art Gallery

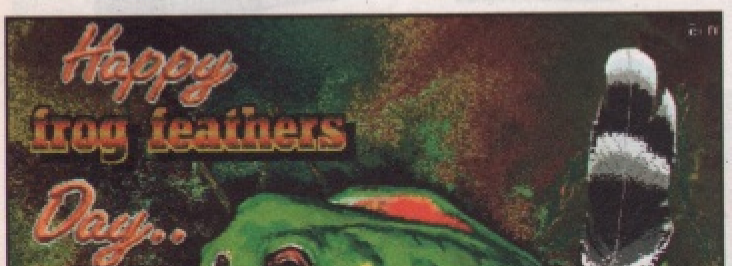
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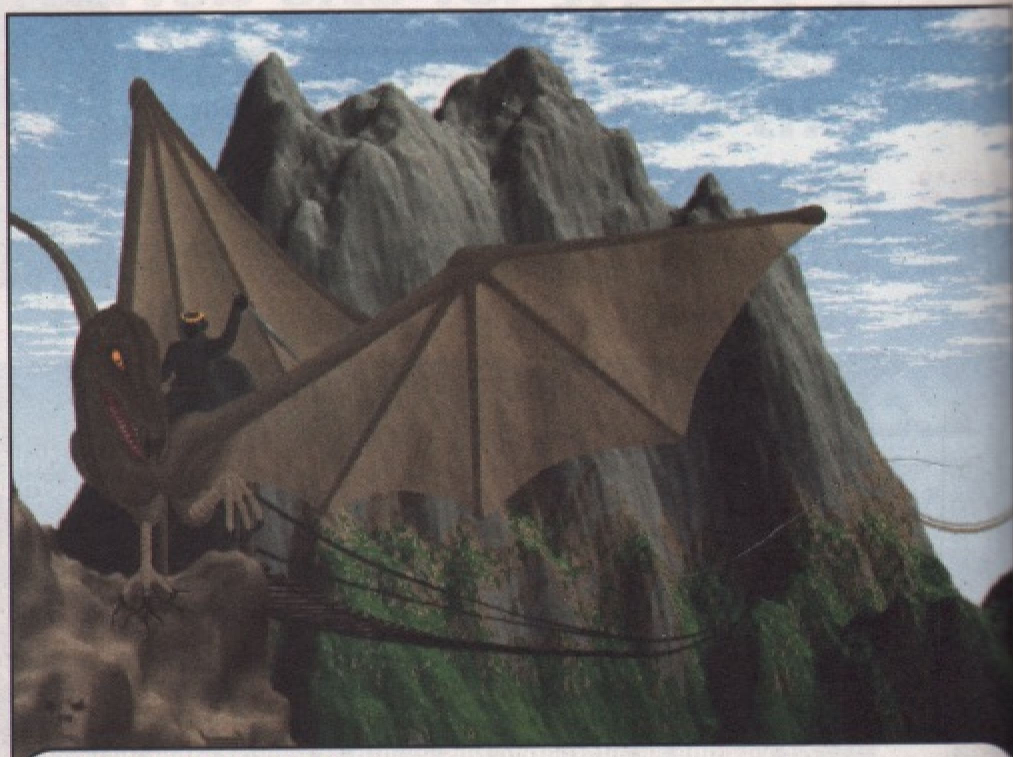
Artist: Irina Smith-Gicburg, Southampton
Amiga: A4000 Software: Photogenics V1.2



Artist: Stephen Gardiner, CUCDIII
Amiga: A1200 Software: Imagine, Image FX



Artist: Marina J Cox, Australia
Amiga: A1200 Software: DPaint



Artist: Kent Stahre, Emailand
Amiga: Not known Software: Brilliance, Imagine

Join the club

We sometimes receive queries from artists or even software developers about work published in Art Gallery. As a result we will be offering a free contact service through these pages in forthcoming months. If you need an artist or if you have artwork which you would like to have displayed with a contact address for interested parties please write to us now, enclosing your artwork (on disk), your project details etc.



Artist: Mark Sheeky, Chesire
Amiga: AGA Software: Imagine 3



Artist: Kent Stahre, Emailand
Amiga: Not known Software: Brilliance, Imagine



Artist: Mille Patrice, CUCDIII Amiga: AGA
Software: Photogenics, Imagine, Brilliance



Artist: Derek Thompson, CUCDIII
Amiga: AGA Software: DPaint IV, Photogenics, Imagine 2.0

Imagine 3.0

PART 9

A little green man takes off with Daisy under cover of darkness! Find out how we helped him do it with Imagine's many different light sources.

Getting the lighting right is what differentiates an average image from a spectacular one. This month we'll look at how the position and type of light sources can transform a flat and unrealistic render into a lifelike one.

John Kennedy

Come into the light, my dear?

Before Imagine will even start rendering there must be at least one light source in every scene. For best results, however, you'll probably need at least two light sources. And just to add even more realism Imagine has a special form of light source called 'ambient lighting'. This is a general light applied equally to all objects from all directions.

Achieving absolute realism in a picture is not always desirable though. You have to decide whether you want to go for realism (like Babylon 5) or simply what looks best (like Star Trek TNG). Realism requires that you have a single light source, usually the sun and no ambient lighting. However, trying to recreate what a giant space ship floating in deep space would actually look like can be pretty dull as a lot of the objects would be in the shadows and lacking detail. The creators of Babylon 5 get around this by ensuring that their star backdrops contain lots of purple and blue nebula rather than simple darkness. Also, the ships in Star Trek all seem to manage to look perfectly lit from all directions and some even are fitted with their own light sources for illumination.

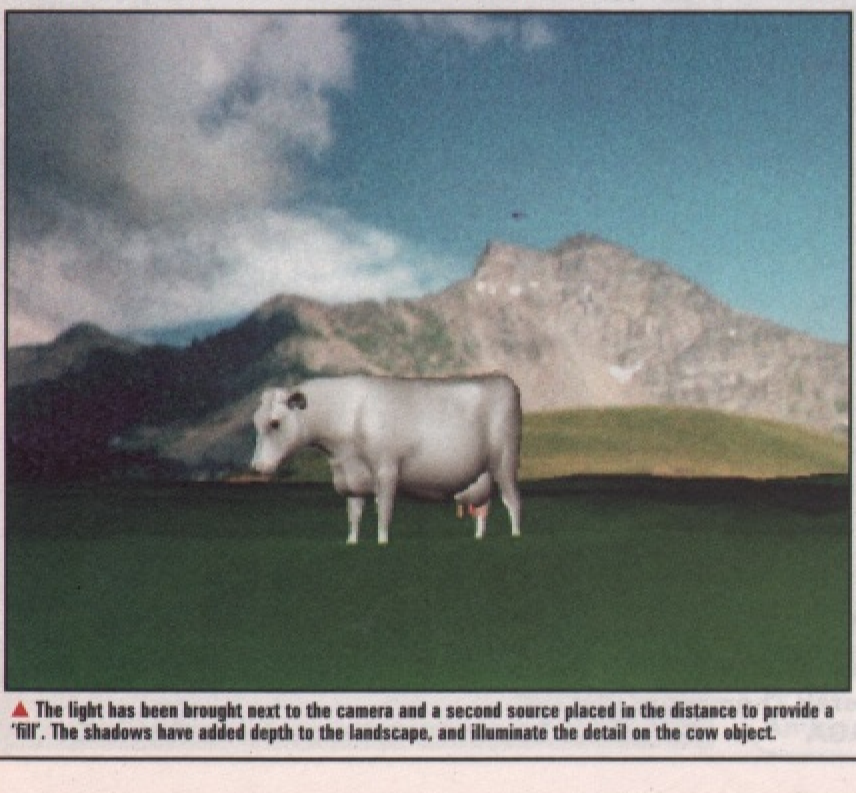
Below is a more practical example. There are generally accepted ways to position light sources for best effect. A simple scene, say a camera and one object, requires two light sources. The first is far away and this is the 'fill' light. The second light is placed close to the camera for the main illumination. You can see the effects of these lights in the follow illustrations. When using digitised backdrop images as shown here, try and arrange the lights so that they cast shadows in the same way as the sun does in the scanned image.



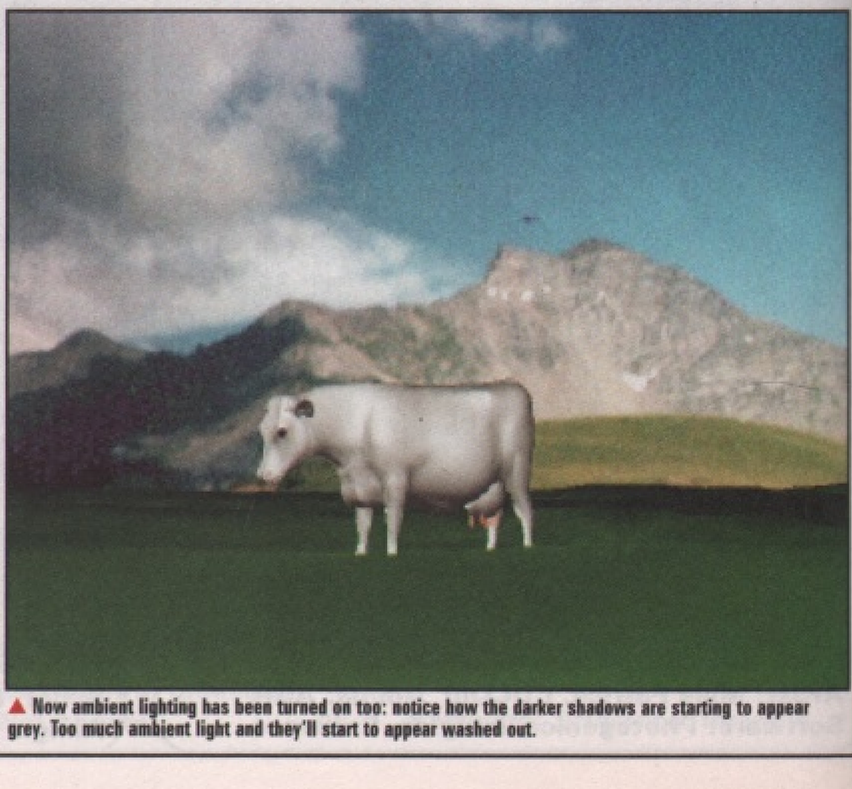
▲ Here there is only one light source which is placed behind the object. Although dramatic, you probably won't use this effect very often.



▲ The single light source has been moved away, high in the sky as though it were the sun. Look how bland the landscape looks.



▲ The light has been brought next to the camera and a second source placed in the distance to provide a 'fill'. The shadows have added depth to the landscape, and illuminate the detail on the cow object.

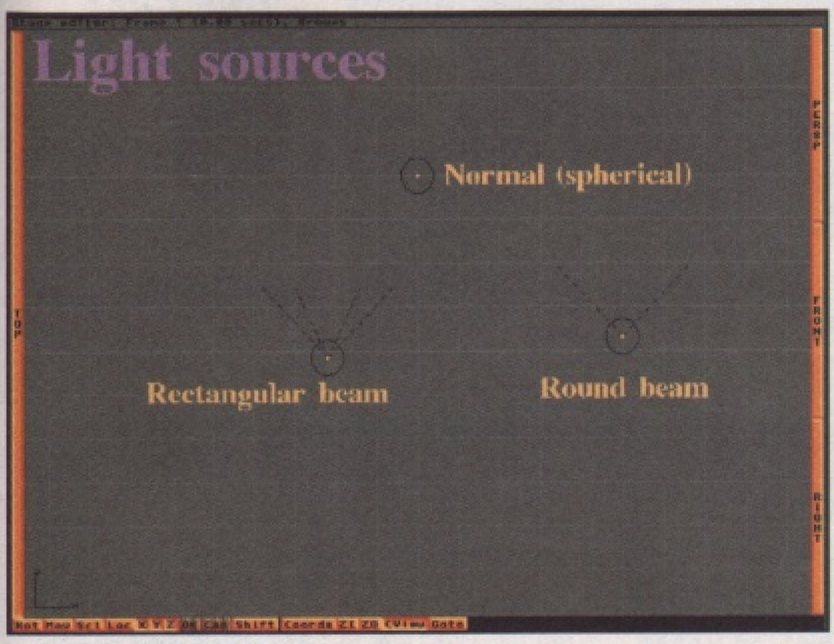


▲ Now ambient lighting has been turned on too: notice how the darker shadows are starting to appear grey. Too much ambient light and they'll start to appear washed out.

Just your type? Pick one here

Imagine 3 originally introduced the idea of having light sources which are not necessarily point sources but send out light in all directions ie spherical. It's now possible to control the direction the light travels and define the light beam as either round or rectangular.

There are also other types of light source such as a source which emits parallel rays. Parallel rays are like those from the sun and illuminate all objects equally. To select the type of light source you'll need to create a normal light and then go to the Action editor and look at the object's 'Actor' line.



When you create light sources with either round or rectangular settings and use the Display menu to switch on the 'Light Lines' option you'll see which direction the lights are pointing in. There are no lines drawn for the default spherical light source because the light is pointing in all directions at once. You can combine the light beams with foggy objects as before, to create rather cool searchlight effects. You'll need to match the shape of the light beam objects to suit the light source.



▲ Normal light source

In the real world, light sources cast shadows and Imagine will do this too. You can switch shadows on and off from the Action editor 'Actor' requester as before. With the shadows turned on, rendering times are increased dramatically soonly use them when strictly necessary. You'll need to use Trace mode, not scanline, to see the shadows. Only use shadows with the light sources which actually require them. The last image features a round light source with shadows switched on. There is a fill light in the distance and ambient lighting is turned on. The image is 1024 by 768 pixels and took 18 minutes to render in trace mode on an 68040 based A4000.



▲ Round light source

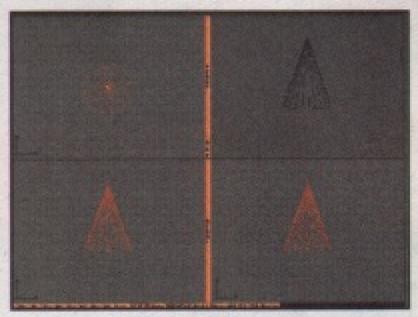


▲ This image features a round light source with the shadows switched on. It took 18 minutes to render in trace mode on an A4000.

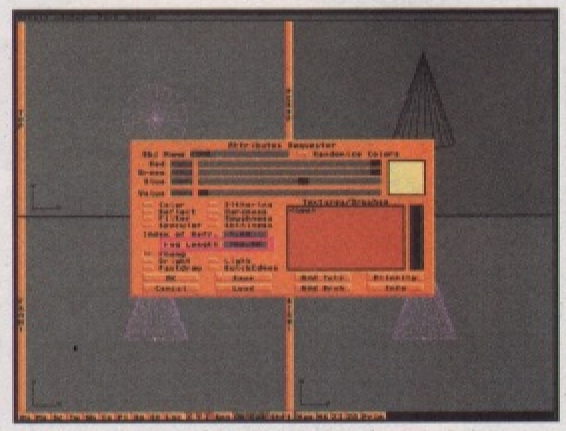
Making the invisible visible

It's often desirable to make beams of light visible, so that the beam itself can be observed. For example it would be very useful for creating a spooky picture complete with lots of nasty ghouls and ghosts hovering about. Or how about a spaceship's tractor beam. The possibilities are endless.

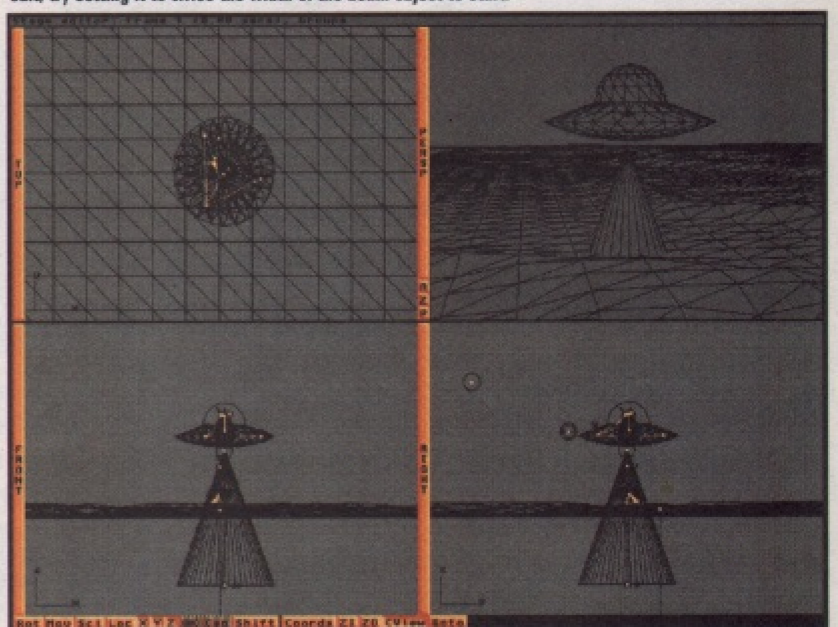
Luckily, this is quite an easy effect to achieve and it makes use of the 'fog length' of an object. Let's say for example you want to make a space ship emit a beam of light. (Obviously this is what is required to create a Class 3 tractor beam). Then all you have to is follow the examples to the left here and you'll have one in no time. Simple isn't it?



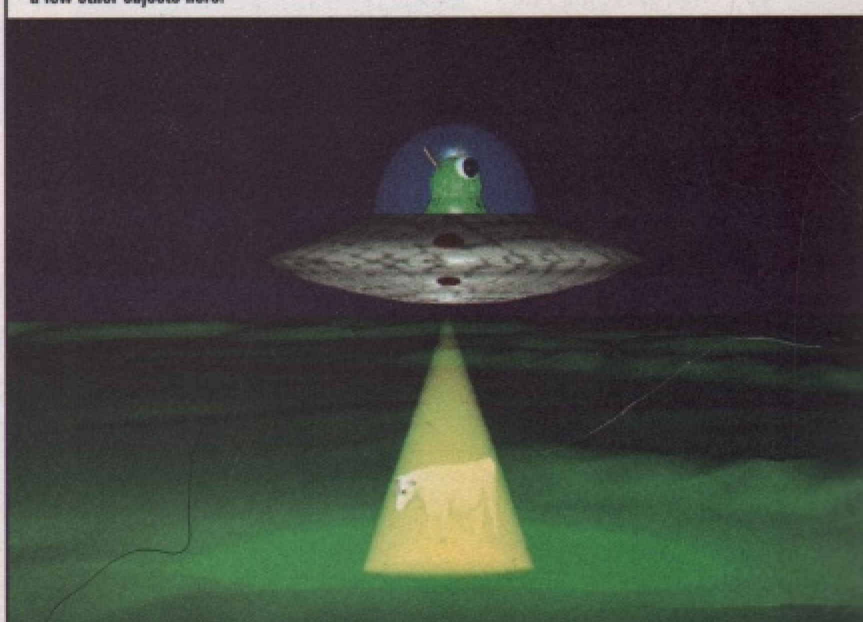
▲ In the detail editor, create an object (cone or cylinder) which will be the beam of light.



▲ Alter the beam colour to white or similar. Adjust the Fog Length to suit, try setting it to twice the width of the beam object to start.



▲ Now in the Stage Editor create the light source and position the beam where you want it. I've added a few other objects here.



▲ Finally render the scene in scanline or trace modes. A possible solution to the BSE problem? Selling cattle to alien invaders for their own bizarre breeding experiments.

are you ready for Revs?

How would you describe this car?



Nah, too old – I want electric windows and cruise control

my, haven't you got soft hands...

get out of my face, tart

a mental 160bhp road monster that's hotter than a lido full of chilli paste

you know the score

*get **Revs** and make your motor low, loud 'n' lairy without having to sell your gran*

too flashy for my tastes – and it's probably got awful fuel economy

you are a sad Maestro-loving pipsqueak

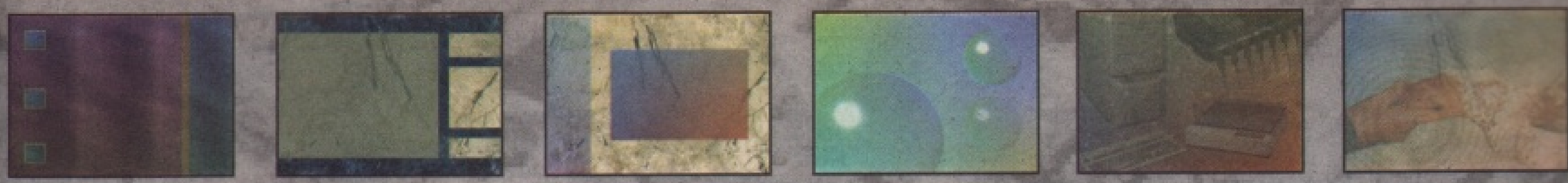
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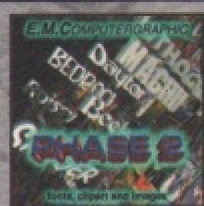
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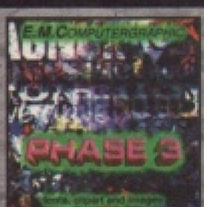
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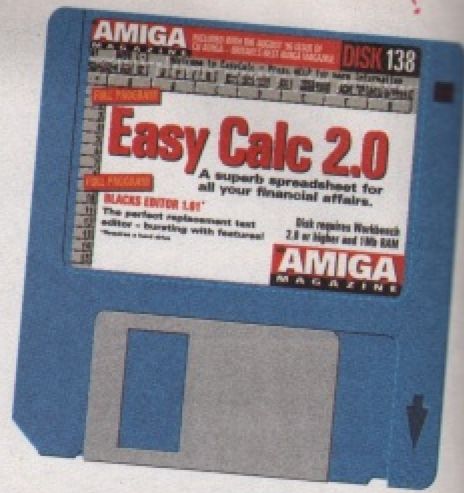
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EasyCalc



PART 2

Even complicated things can look easy, as we're about to find out in this last EasyCalc tutorial.

We're often amazed at how professionals, such as gymnasts, can make something extremely difficult (such as triple somersault) look easy. Likewise in last month's tutorial we saw how to make EasyCalc carry out complex computations and still keep the presentation looking smart and simple. This month we'll build on this technique in an effort to keep our convoluted forms and other numerical data looking simple.

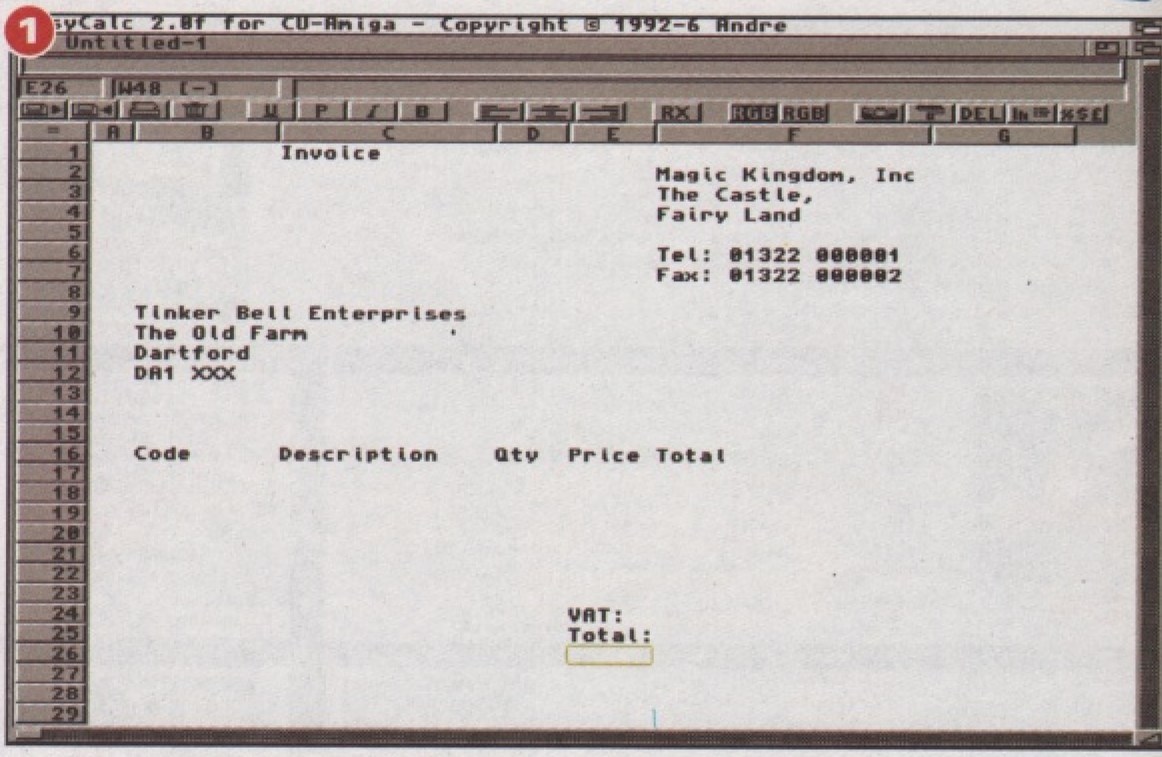
For this tutorial we're going to use an invoice as an example. Most invoices have rows of items, with the total displayed at the end of row. At the bottom of invoice there is normally a final total. In EasyCalc this set up is easy to recreate, all you have to do is use the SUM function and tally the results up. However, while using the SUM may be simple, it won't leave our spreadsheet looking very nice. It would lead to untidy invoices, with an unsightly 0.00 shown when no data is present. A more professional arrangement is to have the program figure out when no data is present and hide the worthless and untidy 0.00 from view. This is exactly what we're going to do here and similar techniques can be used in any spreadsheet where calculations are made on cells that don't always contain values and a tidy display is required, such as company accounts and club membership records,

This spreadsheet also shows how the powerful built-in functions of our cover disk can be used. In this case we use the VAT function but you could change this to others as the need arises. Several of the tutorial files supplied on the original uncompressed disk demonstrate the other functions available.

Step one

We start off the spreadsheet by setting up a basic layout, this includes the company names (whom the invoice is from and to whom it is addressed) and the relevant data such as a product code, description, quantity and item price. Below this information are the totals for the VAT and the total invoice tally. The totals will all be worked out for us by the program. For now we're just interested in getting the formula and cell content right so we can bypass layout for the moment. The screen shot seen here shows where all the information needed will go, formatting and other paraphernalia will come later.

1



Step two

This formula (marked 2 below right) takes the individual unit price (found in cell E17) and multiplies it by the number of units required (the quantity found in D17) then displays the result.

However, if the invoice was blank, with no items entered, this would display 0 in the column, making it look messy. This formula uses the IF function, checks if the result is less than 1 (ie 0) and if it is returns a space, if not then it returns the total. As a space can't be seen when the invoice is empty (so the total comes to 0) nothing is displayed making it look clean and tidy.

Step three

Formula number 3 (right) shows the power of EasyCalc's built in functions. This formula goes in cell F24 and calculates the VAT of the items listed. If we didn't have the VAT function we'd need to multiply the result by 17.5 and then divide the result by 100, with a formula something like =(@sum(F17:F23)*17.5)/100, as it is we just need to add the VAT function to the front of the SUM function and it will total the column up for us. However, like the Row Total functions this leaves us with 0 in the VAT cell when the spreadsheet is empty. To get around this the function in step 4 is used.

Step four

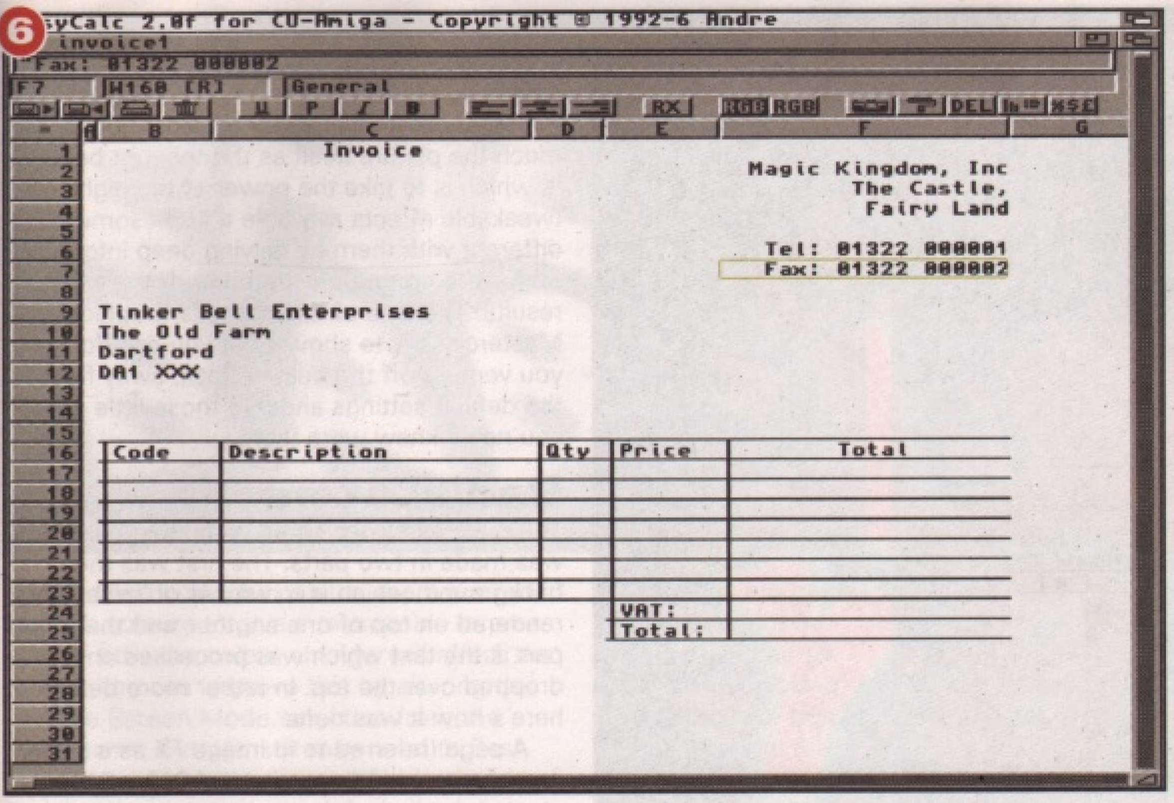
Formula 4 is a combination of the first two formulas. It calculates the VAT, then checks if the result is less than one, in which case a space is returned ie the " " bit. If it's greater, the VAT figure is recalculated and returned. Once this is done copy cell F17 and Paste it Relative (found under the Edit menu) into cells F18 to F23. Remember how last month we

2
```
=@IF(D17*E17<1)," ",D17*E17)
```

3
```
=@VAT(@SUM(F17:F23))
```

4
```
=@IF(@VAT(@SUM(F17:F23))<1)," ",@VAT(@SUM(F17:F23)))
```

5
```
=IF(@SUM(F17:F24)<1," ",@SUM(F17:F24))
```



saw that the Relative Paste inserts the formula into the new cells changing the references in it in the process, so D17*E17 becomes D18*E18 etc? This is quicker than retyping the formula again and again.

Step five

Formula 5 is the last formula, thankfully! If you've followed the previous steps it should be pretty straightforward. Like the VAT calculation, before it tots up the total of the invoice, it checks if a number is below 1 and providing it isn't it shows the answer. Notice how we've now extended the range to take into account the row totals AND the newly calculated VAT amount. As before if the result is less than 1 no figure is shown, rather the invisible space character. This screen shot also shows the completed design and look of the invoice – pretty smart for a couple of minutes work.

Step six

Now we've got the formula in place we can start to tidy up our spreadsheet's presentation. Firstly, centre various heading columns, and right justify the company addresses. Next, select all the cells that will contain values, on this spreadsheet this is cells E17 to E23 and F24 to F25, and change their format to currency by clicking on the Edit, Format Currency menu. This will change any values seen in these cells to be prefixed with a sterling character '£'. If you wanted you could also add in extra supplemental data, such as a data and invoice reference.

Step seven

The spreadsheet is now very nearly in place. As can be seen, when we have an empty spreadsheet nothing shows in the form – precisely the way we wanted it! However, it's not particularly neat and doesn't really make use of EasyCalc's formatting capabilities. Highlight the first line of the invoice form and change the background colour, then do the same for the total row. I've also set the headings to Bold and changed some of the text colours - both of these are done using the Edit Colour, Text and Background menus. I've also used the Define Line tool to add borders to the spreadsheet to make it look just that little bit smarter ...

Step eight

Ta da! The finished spreadsheet, complete with all the attribute changes shown in stage seven. For the purpose of this screen shot I've also entered some typical data into the first two lines of the invoice. See how the total cells now show the results – when previously they were empty!

Now for a challenge. The formulae used here have a problem – the invoice can't handle negative numbers (needed for discounts and refunds etc). You tell us the solution and we'll print the answer in the Q&A pages next month, along with the name of the first person who sends in a spreadsheet that does it correctly.

This brings us to the end of the EasyCalc tutorials (don't all shout at once!) but not the last of the help from CU Amiga Magazine for it. If you have a problem with this application or any of our other utility cover disks for that matter drop our Q&A team a line.

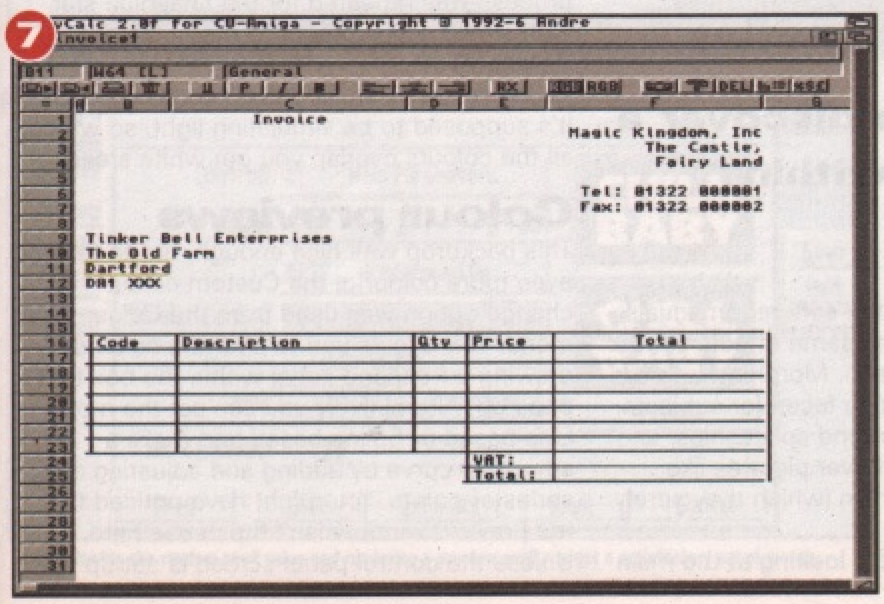
Please note these queries will not be handled over the phone, you will have to write in to CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. ■

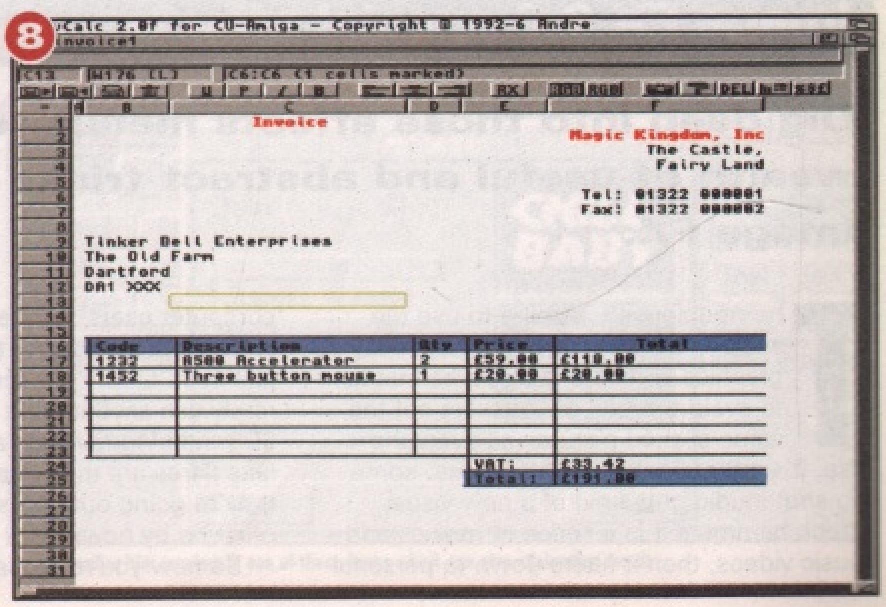
Andy Leaning.

Let's get clever

Using EasyCalc to handle invoices etc has other advantages apart from making them easier to do and presenting them in a simple manner. For example, building on the two tutorials we've shown you it would be possible to have EasyCalc provide management information gained from invoices. You could, for instance, have a graph showing what product codes were appearing most in invoices, thus showing sales trends. Or maybe you could create a graph showing what products were ordered in quantity (invaluable for stock control). Throw in a dash of Arexx (EasyCalc has a very comprehensive Arexx port) and almost anything is possible.

Naturally, spreadsheets of this sort take a lot of working out, but they're very possible with a little forethought. The key to spreadsheets is to work out in advance what you want to achieve, plan out the best route to doing this and only then start writing the format and formulae to produce it. Spreadsheets are one of the few types of programs where just sitting at your Amiga and and experimenting pays no dividends whatsoever. When trying to create complex documents planning is everything.







Graphics Masterclass

Image FX 2.6 special effects

Dig deep into those effects menus to discover a wealth of useful and abstract tricks within Image FX.

The trouble with learning to use the snazzy new effects offered by today's graphics software is that it can be hard to avoid the trap of knocking out the same clichéd pictures as everyone else. It's easy to see how it happens: some big shot studio gets hold of a new visual effect, hammers it in a series of movies and music videos, then it filters down to personal computer users, where the software manuals show how to recreate the same effects you've just seen on the big screen. Morphing tutorials rarely use anything but two faces for subjects, 3D rendering revolves around spaceships, and lens flares are thrown all over pictures like they're going out of fashion (which they surely must be by now).

So now you're probably looking at the main picture here and asking what's so ground-breaking about this little bit of psychedelia, what's so original that I can justify those statements about tired clichés? Well it's not so much the picture itself as the thought behind it, which is to take the power of the highly tweakable effects available and do something different with them by delving deep into their options to come up with more off-the-wall results. The idea of this month's Graphics Masterclass is to show what you can do when you venture off the beaten track, away from the default settings and into those little menus you never knew were there.

Radial stars

The main picture, created with Image FX 2.6, was made in two parts. The first was the background, which is a number of 'radial stars' rendered on top of one another, and the other part is the text which was processed and dropped over the top. In rather more detail, here's how it was done ...

A page (referred to in Image FX as a buffer) was set up with dimensions of 640 x 640 pixels and the first of the stars was rendered. With standard settings, the radial star normally comes out looking like a lens flare but in this case the number of points was increased to somewhere around 30 or 40, with the thickness level also set to around 40. The idea was to make three stars, one yellow, one red and one blue, so with a red pen colour selected from the palette, Draw Colour was selected from the radial star's Colour option (meaning the star would be drawn in the selected colour rather than white). The preview box can be used to test the settings. To get a perfectly centred star, the co-ordinates were entered as numbers in the Centre boxes (320 is half 640, hence the centre point) instead of being placed by hand on the small preview window.

Once the first star was rendered, a yellow pen was selected and the star effect chosen again. This time the Angle setting was altered so that the first 'prong' (working clockwise) was one third of the way between the first and second prongs of the original star. Also the Corona/Glow button was selected to bring up an additional control panel. This alters the size and diameter of the halo around the prongs, so an increase in the diameter setting meant that the second halo would appear outside that of the first. When this had rendered, the process was repeated for the final blue star, with similar adjustments to the Angle and Corona values.

Radial star is an 'additive' process because it's supposed to be simulating light, so where all the colours overlap you get white areas.

Colour previews

This backdrop was nice enough, but to make it even more colourful the Custom colour change option was used from the Colour menu. This allows you to alter the colours by drawing a freehand curve within the box that pops up. Alternatively you can set the mode to Line-based or Spline-based and make a smoother curve by adding and adjusting a series of points. You might have noticed that the preview window isn't much use here. Unless the control panel screen is set up with





a varied and colourful palette, there are not enough colours to give a reasonable impression of how the colour change will affect the image. You can improve this by altering the Choose Screen Mode selection from the Prefs panel, but you still may need to flesh out the palette with a range of colours mixed by hand.

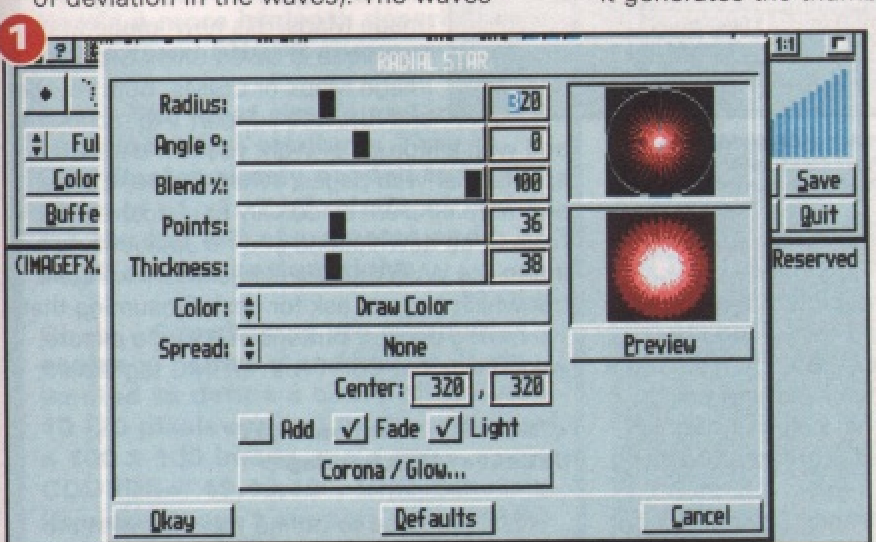
Adding movement

Making the text was fairly simple. Once the text had been entered and loaded from the text/font section it was pasted onto a spare buffer screen, then processed with the Liquid effect from the Distort menu. In this case, only a subtle distortion was required to keep the text legible but still imply some movement. The number of waves was set to three with a scaling of 20 (this defines the amount of deviation in the waves). The waves themselves are generated by a 'random seed' which can be changed by clicking the Randomise button. If you don't like the first set of waves you get, randomise the seed and take another preview. When you've got one that looks right select Okay and it will be applied to the picture or the brush, depending on which is selected in the area box on the main control panel.

The next process was to add yet more mellow movement to the text with the Motion Blur option from the Convolve menu. The preview window is misleading for this one, as it doesn't scale the blur length when it generates the thumbnail, making it look as if your image will be blurred much more than it actually will. This text was blurred with a Length setting of 40 pixels. Finally the text was jazzed up by picking it up as a brush (with auto-background detection turned on) and then passed through the False Colour process. This was then pasted onto the previously prepared backdrop to form the final image. ■

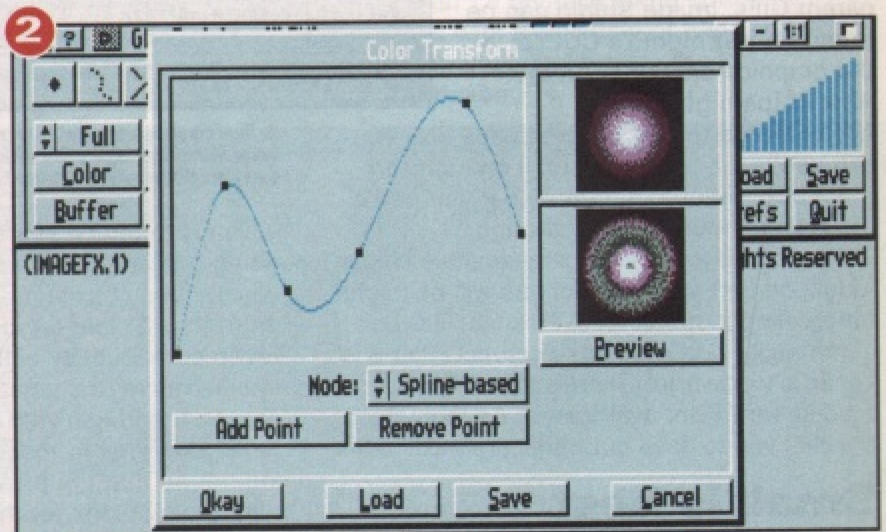
Tony Horgan

1



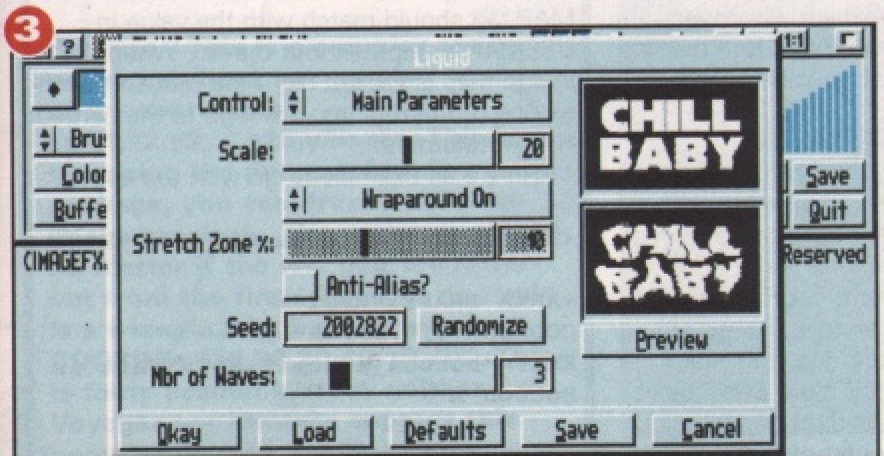
▲ Playing around with the parameters of the Radial Star panel can lead to many attractive effects.

2



▲ Once you've rendered a few stars over one another, try the Custom colour changer to brighten things up.

3



▲ Try altering the random seed value and rendering a preview until you get a satisfactory set of waves.

4



▲ The motion blur preview is one of those items which can give misleading results.

Wired World

PART 15

Pretty pictures on web sites are great but it's annoying if they take a long time to download. Here's how you can get around this problem.



There's a few techniques which when coupled with the excellent array of commercial and shareware graphics manipulation packages the Amiga has, will pay dividends on your WWW site. For this tutorial we'll be looking at some examples of these and what they can do to make your WWW site look good without of using up too much memory or wasting time.

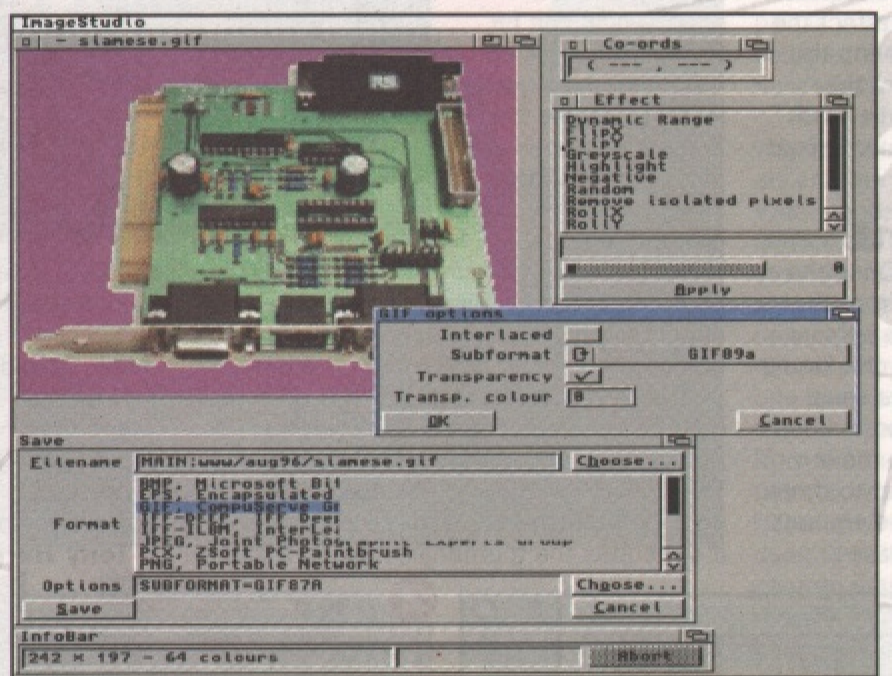
Image Studio is one example of an extremely useful package. The most attractive thing about Image Studio is that it has a GIF 89a saver built-in. This is the format required to create essential transparent GIFs. Image Studio can be found on last month's CUCD3 in the graphics drawer or on the Aminet (path gfx/conv.) Unregistered the maximum image size you can use is limited but it's still enough for most applications. Remember, if you use it often you should register though.

Any package which has reasonable colour reduction and scaling functions will be useful for creating pictures for Web sites. On the commercial side of things Personal Paint 6 is especially powerful. There's also a GIF IO module for PPaint available on Aminet which enables you to save out transparent GIF 89as.

Small is best

The general rule for using images in HTML documents is to keep them as small as possible. It's a simple formula which dictates that images with less colours use less space and therefore take less time to download. Another side effect is that images with less colours are more likely to look correct on Amiga browsers running on screens with less colours than the images in the browser. A good rule of thumb is using 32 or 64 colours for GIFs where possible. Remember NOT to dither the image when recolouring; while this looks great in the package you're working on, a browser fights for 'pens' to display the image and the dithered patterns stand out and look extremely ugly.

Transparent GIFs require one colour from the palette across all of the parts of the picture which is to be transparent. The easiest way of doing this is to create a new gaudy colour which doesn't exist in the picture and click on remap. Colour 0 would be a good idea to retain compatibility with AWeb. Then save the image, move to a paint package and paint around the image with that colour. It would be a good idea to make it a grey before saving out so that the browsers which get it wrong won't look too horrible. Saving this out as a GIF 89a transparent, it should appear so in a browser. Failing that, there's a PD program called GifTrans which will covert GIFs to transparent. You can find it in the Aminet path; gfx/conv/giftrans.lha.



▲ **Here's a picture prepared to save out as a transparent GIF89a in Image Studio. The bright green colour was chosen not to interfere with the edges of the image and it won't be seen in a browser.**

New techniques

Last month, we looked at using pictures as image links to other HTML documents. This works very well for many applications except where you may want to make your pages look spectacularly different. In order to do this, the best bet is to create a picture of your entire graphics front end containing many buttons or pictures of their own. Previously the trouble with using standard image links was that clicking on any part of the picture would send you to the same document.

That was until so-called Image Maps appeared as a HTML 3.0 draft and this has now been nearly universally accepted by browser authors. What these do is actually read off the position of the mouse where it clicks in an image. The values are normally then sent to a special service residing on the WWW server which decides, based on the mouse x,y positions, which HTML document to go to.

This is fairly popular on the Web at the moment but it has been superseded by an even better method which can be used by anyone without access to the 'CGI binaries' which are necessary for Image Maps.This new Image Map technique is called Client Side Image Maps or CSIMs. Both Voyager and IBrowse support this technique and with a little bit of work you can create spectacular web pages. What's more, CSIMs are more efficient since only one picture will have to be downloaded and no additional talking to the WWW server is necessary to figure out which page to ask for next. Presuming that we have a bank of buttons in a single picture, we activate the CSIM with an IMG tag like so;

```
<IMG SRC="buttons.gif"
USEMAP="#buttonmap">
```

Next we need to define the map with the <MAP> tag which describes the regions inside the picture. The NAME attribute in the MAP tag should match with the value in USEMAP except without the '#'. When the image map is clicked on, if the mouse matches one of the regions, it will go to the named HREF statement.

Here's an example to go with the above;

```
<MAP NAME="buttonmap">

<AREA SHAPE="RECT"
COORDS="0,0,99,49"
HREF="button_a.html" ALT="This is
Button A">

<AREA SHAPE="RECT"
COORDS="100,0,199,49"
```



▲ Image Maps can be used to great affect by creating buttons/links within your own graphic image as seen here on HiSoft's site.

```
HREF="button_b.html" ALT="This is
Button B">

</MAP>
```

The attributes in the AREA tag need a little more explanation. The SHAPE attribute defines the particular type of region, there are RECT, CIRCLE and POLYGON shapes (see the boxout below for more in-depth description of these). The COORDS attribute specifies the x,y locations of the shapes. The exact format depends on whether you are using RECT, CIRCLE or POLYGON. The top left pixel is 0,0 so that if you were to define an entire area of a 100 x 100 rectangle it would be 0,0,99,99. The HREF attribute specifies the URL of the HTML document which that region will specify. Also, if the regions overlap, the area specified first will get priority. With this example we can see that if you clicked on the left-hand side of the picture within the 100 x 50 rectangle, the browser would go to button_a.html. If the right rectangle was clicked on, button_b.html would be the destination document. The ALT tags are especially useful again with text based browsers (if anyone still uses such things) since they'll get no links or text unless the ALT attributes are inserted.

You may like to even define areas that don't do anything but would simply display the ALT string. In this case, the NOHREF tag can be used instead of HREF. You could move the mouse over a tiny signature on the bottom right and see the author's name at the bottom of the browser for example.

A tip for the creation of CSIMs is to open your text editor on a paint package using a public screen. If your paint package shows the coordinates in the menu bar as you move around the picture, it should be easy to pick the right values to type into your <MAP> tag on the same screen. Another tip is to use the Fix To Grid function of a paint package so that every coordinate is a multiple of five pixels or so. You can also paint boxes around the buttons etc and then simply move the mouse to them later to read of the coordinates. Make sure you don't save the image with the boxes drawn on it like shown here!

Get in shape

Here's a more in-depth description of the three SHAPE commands;

Rect - The most simple and most common AREA attribute. The Coordinates simply needed to be given in x1,y1,x2,y2 where x1 and y1 are the top left coordinates and x2,y2 are the bottom right.

Circle - Coordinates are given as centre x, centre y and radius. If we wanted to define a circle of radius 10 (20 pixels across) in the middle of a 100 x 100 image, we'd use COORDS="49,49,10". Unfortunately, IBrowse doesn't support this SHAPE so it's probably best to settle for a RECT instead.

Polygon - This is a complex shape which can have any number of pairs of x,y coordinates; xy,y1,x2,y2,...,x20,y20 etc. This is like using the polygon tool in a paint package, you can draw around an image precisely. The region is closed no matter if the last pair are different from the first. A simple example is a triangle which could be COORDS="20,20,30,40,10,40". This is fairly academic since neither Voyager nor IBrowse support this complex SHAPE function.

A bit of support

Finally, to cater for users of browsers which do not support CSIMs, the easiest thing to do is to create a row of text buttons underneath the image. You can also make those browsers go off to a page if they click anywhere on the CSIM picture. Here's a complete example;

```
<A HREF="CrapBrowser.html"><IMG
SRC="ImageMap.gif" USEMAP="#button-
map"></A> <MAP>

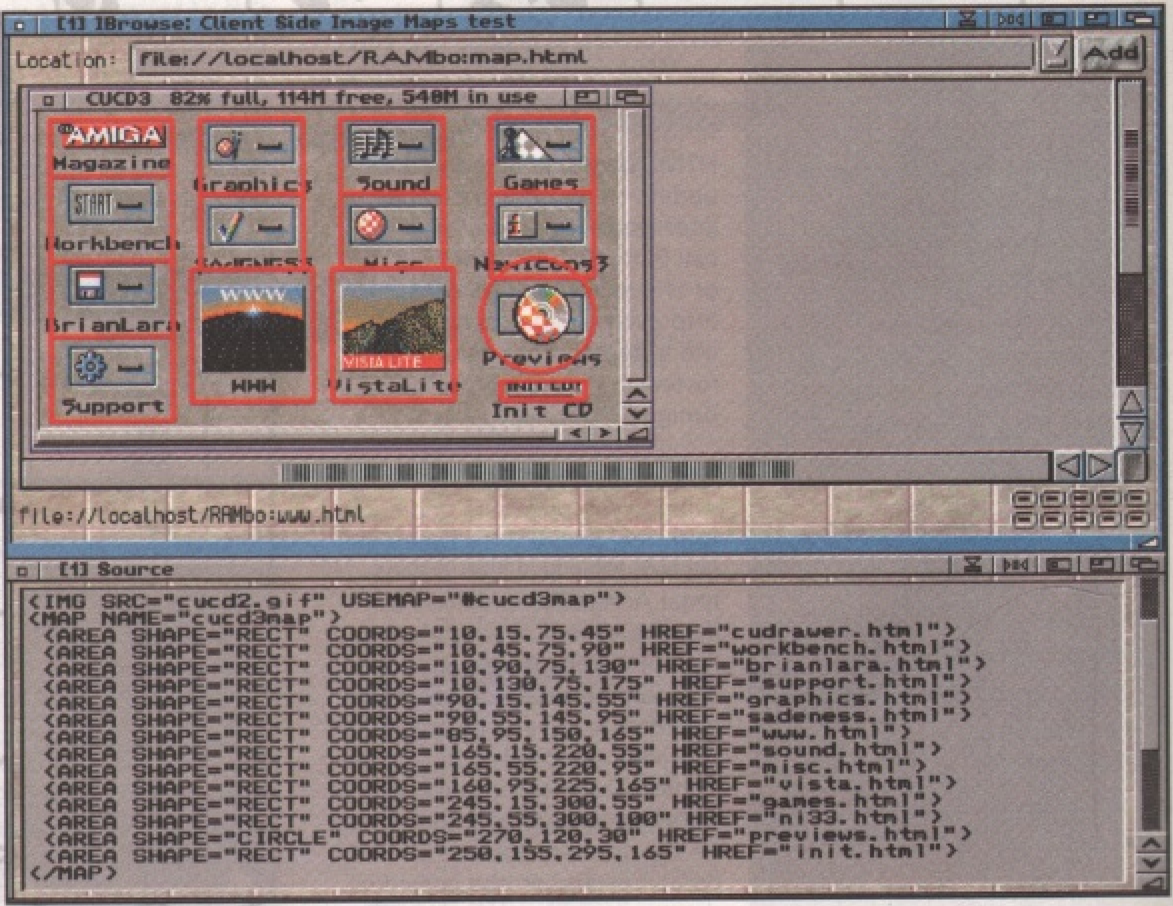
<AREA SHAPE="RECT"
COORDS="0,0,99,49"
HREF="buta.html"> <AREA
SHAPE="RECT" COORDS="100,0,199,49"
HREF="butb.html"> </MAP>

<A HREF="buta.html">Button A</A>|<A
HREF="butb.html">Button B</A>
```

Here all browsers will see the image map. If the image map is clicked on by a browser that doesn't support CSIM, they'll be sent to CrapBrowser.html. Or the user of that browser can click on the text links underneath. Just recently, an Arexx script for ImageFX 2.0+ to create CSIMs appeared on Aminet, check it out in the path gfx/conv/ MakeImageMap.lha.

Now you know all you need to know to make an amazing front end for your web pages so why not combine transparent GIFs and CSIMs? Or raytrace some buttons backdrops with a lens-flare or two? The sky's the limit so until next time ... ■

Matt Bettinson



▲ Here's IBrowse with an example CSIM complete with source underneath. Here I've left red boxes around the invisible regions.



Net God speaks

Supply and Demand. That ancient edict has dictated global economies since the beginning of civilisation. Unfortunately it stops short where some Amiga Comms Software is concerned. Yes it's reached as far as Web browsers but that's about it. The thrust of my rant this month is News clients. Many are happy with Thor but there's no doubt there's still great demand for a small, dedicated easy-to-use news package somewhat similar to YAM for E-mail. This is why so many people held high hopes for MNews. Unfortunately though, MNews 1.0 proved that it really is possible to write an application more buggy than Windoze. :-/ Under normal circumstances you just wouldn't run it but the demand is such for a package like it, many are downloading it anyway. But wait! There is an alternative: our old friend Olli Wagner has come to the rescue (again) by porting his MicroDot News 'and' E-mail package to MUI and released as MicroDot-II. So don't despair net heads, help is at hand.

Surf's up!

A new version of AWeb, more about the CU Amiga Magazine mailing list and supply finally meets demand for a News slurper ...



BlitterSoft does AWeb-II

BlitterSoft announced they are now selling the AWeb-II bundle from AmiTrix Developments. The MUI-less AWeb-II browser itself now supports background images, background/text/link colours, image borders, centring and limited frame support. It's bundled with the HTML Heaven 2.0 HTML/WWW development package which now also has support for HTML 3.2 tags. Also included is the brilliant FTPMount which allows you to mount an FTP: device to access FTP sites via Workbench, CLI, a directory utility and obviously AWeb-II itself. AWeb-II uses HTTX to save out HTML pages as text and a free update to AWeb-II is planned at a later stage. Retailing for £39.95, call BlitterSoft on 01908 261477 or check out their URL on http://www.blittersoft.co.uk for more details. Look out for a full review in the next issue of CU Amiga Magazine.

Tao of Datatypes

Amiga Web browsers and such forth rely on OS 3.0's Datatypes system heavily, which means most Amiga owners need to install a variety of datatypes to handle various image, animation and audio formats. It now turns out there's a Web site called Tao of Datatypes created by Jonathan Gapen. This site lists all available Datatypes including information on the different classes of datatypes and on the individual datatypes themselves. What's more, it provides handy links to the Aminet to download them, making it a One Stop Datatype Shop. Drop in and check it out for yourself at http://www.execpc.com/~innuendo/amiga/os/datatypes

Pure Amiga Expands.

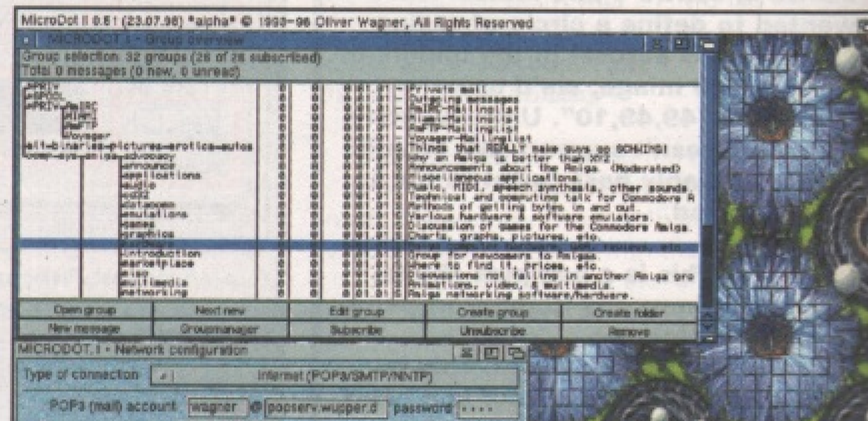
The Pure Amiga WWW resource folks are looking for writers and GFX artists to help build upon the site yet further. They have just opened the 'Pure Amiga Review Library' which is a growing collection of reviews of Amiga related products. They say a couple of the products on the site have never been reviewed before. To see what all the fuss is about visit Pure Amiga at http://www.netlink.co.uk/users/PureAmiga/

If you're interested in helping out on the site, contact Russell Lewis on Rus@fardon.demon.co.uk or Phone +44 (01582) 614298 for more details.

AmigaFCI list grows a FAQ

The AmigaFCI mailing list has matured into an excellent support base for users of the CU Amiga/InternetFCI deal. However now that it's run for several months, most of the common questions have already been answered and so the business of creating an FAQ file to be regularly posted has been undertaken. If you're using InternetFCI and you're not on the list, mail listserv@cu-amiga.co.uk with 'subscribe amigafci' in the body right away. Anyone else wishing to contribute to the FAQ should mail mat@cu-amiga.co.uk. Support FAQs/Bibles on other software are available on the FTP site at ftp.cu-amiga.co.uk/users/cu-amiga/internetfci/

Incidentally, this directory is also used for readers contributions to the CUCDs.



▲ Oliver Wagner's MicroDot II will make News slurping so much easier and faster.

Masterclass

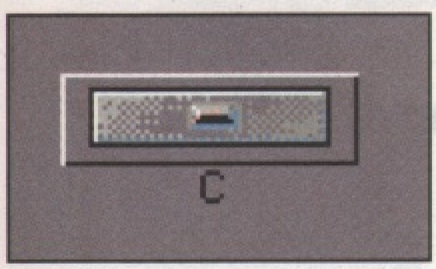
PART 2

All is not what it seems. Behind the 'Show All Files' option lies a hidden world of Workbench files ...

We've already examined the majority of Workbench's visible icons, now we'll take a look at those 'hidden' files which don't have icons.

So how do we seek out these mysterious files? First, to find them you've got get down to Shell level or use the 'Show... All Files' Workbench menu option. A program such as Directory Opus is very useful when it comes to exploring Workbench like this, as it allows you to move from directory to directory and examine the contents with only one or two clicks of the mouse. So let's see what we come up with ...

C you see me



First: the C directory. This is very important, as it is where all the AmigaDOS commands hang out. Most of the commands you can type at the Shell are really unique programs and this is where they are stored. So, if you open a Shell window and enter:

```
cd c:
```

you'll have moved from the default directory to the C directory. You can then type:

```
dir
```

to see a list of all the files present.

On older Workbench systems, the command 'cd' was stored in this directory. Newer versions of the operating system, as used in Amiga 1200s for example, have this command and others built into the OS Kickstart ROM. These commands are referred to as 'resident'. You can get a list of these resident commands by opening a shell and entering:

```
resident
```

This command will return a list of the built-in commands. It's also possible to temporarily make other commands resident too. You do this by including their full path and name after the command, like this:

```
resident c:list
```

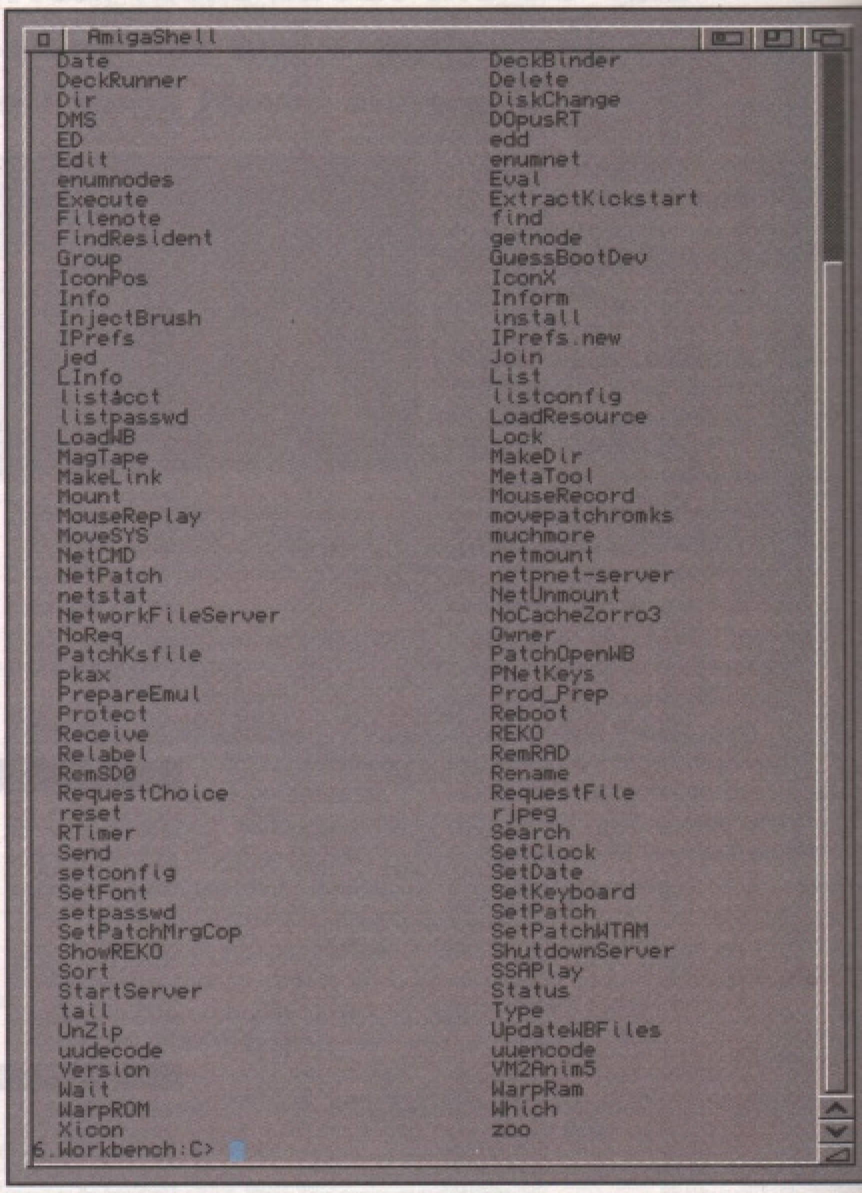
Except this won't work and will return an error message because the List command isn't totally 'Pure'. Yes, another complication. A Pure command is defined as one which is re-entrant and re-executable: in other words, it can be used again and again and several times at once without going wrong.

In Workbench 3 almost all the commands which are Pure have already been made resident. You can check by using the list command, and watching out for the 'p' flag appearing next to any filenames. However, you can force a command to be made resident. In most cases this won't be a dangerous thing, but be aware of the potential for crashing if you multitask or run critical software: such as a bulletin board for example.

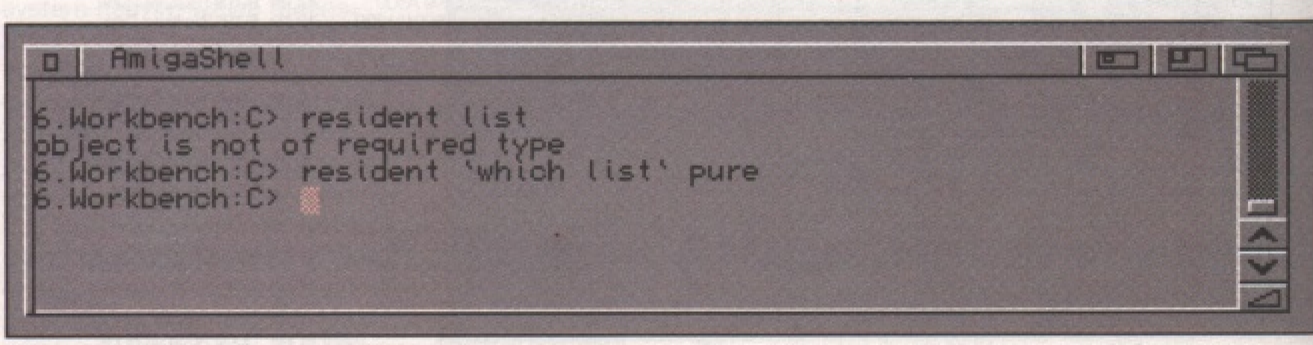
To force a command to become resident, no matter what, use the Pure option, like this:

```
resident c:list pure
```

This makes a command resident and states that you are



▲ To get a list of all the files present on your Amiga, all you have to do is type' dir' in the C directory.



▲ The search is on for those Pure commands which can be used again and again.

How does it do that?

You might be wondering how a command like 'dir' can be executed when you aren't already in the directory in which it is stored. For example, how come when you open a shell you can enter 'dir' no matter if the default directory is Workbench or Ram: You might have thought it would be necessary to include a full path, like this:

```
cd ram: c:dir
```

However, a full path to the command is not needed, so this will work just as well:

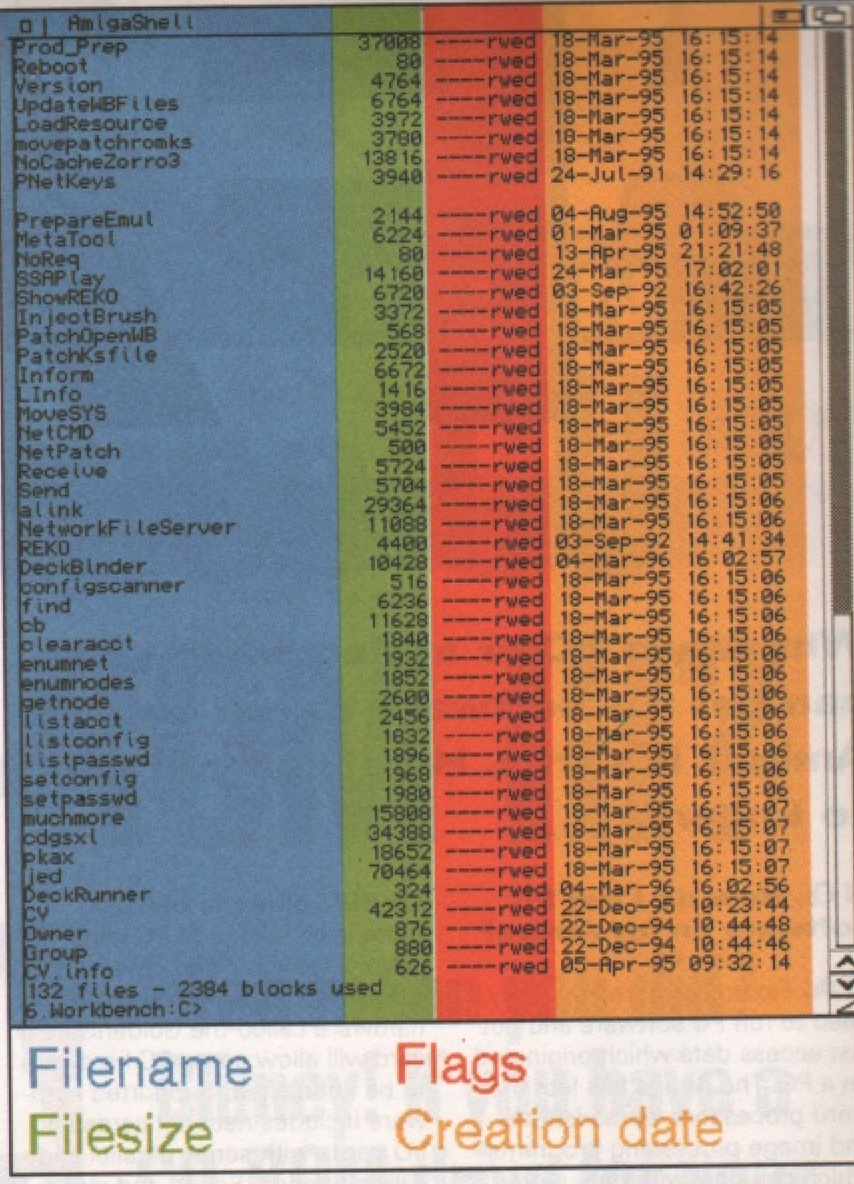
```
cd ram: dir
```

A special command called 'Path' makes this possible. If you look in the startup-sequence, you'll spot the rather heavy duty line:

```
Path >NIL: RAM: C: SYS:Utilities SYS:Rexxc
SYS:System S: SYS:Prefs SYS:WBStartup SYS:Tools
SYS:Tools/Commodities
```

This command sets up the paths which the operating system follows when it encounters a command. When you enter an instruction such as 'dir', the operating system first looks in the current directory (this is the default action). It then looks in 'RAM:' then 'C:' then 'sys:utilities' and so on.

Before you ask, the Path command itself is a resident command and so it doesn't matter where it is stored!



▲ When you use the List command you can call up and keep an eye on the flags associated with each file.

prepared to risk the consequences whatever they may be.

But why make a command resident in the first place? Speed. It can make long AmigaDOS scripts a lot faster if the Operating System doesn't need to spend most of the time tracking down the commands.

A good example is the startup-sequence. This script even forces several non-Pure commands to be resident in the quest for more speed. Look out for the line:

```
Resident >NIL: C:Assign
PURE
```

and check to see why the command doesn't remain resident after the script has ended. Resident commands also take up less memory than commands held, for example, in the RAM disk. No matter how many times the command is executed only one instance of it is used at a time.

Here's a neat little trick. As resident needs the full path to a command, you can make use of the 'which' command to discover it. You can combine the 'which' command with the resident operating using the 'tick' (press the ordinary ' key whilst holding down ALT) to get something like this:

```
resident `which list` pure
```

When you switch off the Amiga, the resident commands which you've created will be lost.

S xpress

The S directory is where Scripts are kept, or at least that was the original intention. It's where you will find the startup-sequence file and the user-startup script.



However, after many years of use, my Amiga has amassed a staggering collection of junk in this directory as many programs have kindly installed useful scripts here for me.

For example, The Art Department has left many files here (mostly in the form of ARexx programs) and so have Spot, Mosaic and Cygnus Ed. Scripts don't take up a great deal of space, and so on a hard drive system there is little to be gained by deleting them. You never know – some day they might be needed.

A script is simply a text file containing AmigaDOS commands. You can write your own script using an text editor, including Ed the standard AmigaDOS editor. Simply add a list of the commands you wish to be used.

Using the script can be done in two ways. First of all you can either use the 'execute' AmigaDOS command like this:

```
execute s:my-script
```

Or you can alter one of the file's flags (special switches to tell the OS how to deal with the file – like 'Pure' for example) to define it as a script. If it's defined as a script, you only need to enter the name by itself, like this:

```
my-script
```

Here is how you would alter the flag to make an ordinary text file into a script:

```
protect s:my-script +S
```

An ARexx script is slightly different in that it cannot be executed with the Execute command. It's not a list of AmigaDOS commands, but a program written in the ARexx language (see previous Masterclass tutorials).

Using List you can check on the various flags associated with each file. You will might have less files than I have: you probably take more care to keep your hard disk tidy than I do!

Lib labs

The libs drawer is the default location for any Amiga libraries. A library in this sense is a file which



contains various sub-routines. By storing the routines in a library, they are available to other programs and other multitasking copies of the same program.

Even the libs drawer of a new Amiga will contain a selection of libraries, including maths routines and ARexx code. After a while the directory will be stuffed with libraries as program after program adds its own routines to the list.

If you have deleted an unwanted application, have a quick look here to see if it has left a library. Before you delete it for good, rename it and check if any other programs are making use of it.

Case closed. The mystery of the hidden files is solved. ■

John Kennedy

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Why buy a PC or a Mac when you can get the software to run on your Amiga? It's true. Here's all you need to know ...

Q. How do I run PC software on my Amiga?

A. First make sure you really need to run PC software and not just access data which originated on a PC. The Amiga has lots of word processors, spreadsheets and image processing programs which can deal with data stored in typical 'PC format'. It can read double-density floppy disks in MS-DOS format using CrossDOS and larger files can be swopped with removable media or serial links.

Q. No, I really need to run PC software.

A. OK, grumpy. In that case you need a PC emulator. This is a program which allows the Amiga to run software designed to run on Intel and compatible processors. There are two: PC Task (about to be released in version 4) and EmplantPC. They are both software emulators, hardware ones are no longer viable.

Q. And Windows?

A. Yes, PC Task can run Windows. Version 3 will run Windows 3.1 and earlier incarnations, version 4 is promised to emulate 486 processors and so will run Windows 95. Don't expect Windows to run very fast though: software emulators are much better with DOS based software.

Q. And PC hardware?

A. PC Task will support most CD-ROM drives. In an A1200 there is no way to fit PC hardware, although if you have an A2000, A3000 or A4000 a piece of hardware called the GoldenGate II card will allow some PC hardware to be connected. Supported hardware includes network cards and I/O cards with serial, parallel and IDE interfaces. Sound and video cards are not supported.

Q. And PC games?

A. Don't expect to be able to play any recent games. You might be able to get them to load but they will run so slowly as to be unplayable. Even Wolfenstein 3D, the great grandfather of PC games, is too slow on an 68040 WarpEngine A4000.

Q. Why is it so slow?

A. It's slow because the emulation is software based. The PC software is running on two levels: first of all, it's executing its own instructions but it's also running on top of a program which emulates the PC processor and hardware. Emulators such as PC Task are very impressive technical achievements and they are an excellent way to use PC software, but it's not a cheap way to get a Pentium based computer. We hope to have a review of PC Task release 4 next month.

Q. What about the Siamese system then?

A. It's not really an emulator. It's an Amiga linked to a real, live PC in a separate box. The Amiga and the PC share the same SCSI hard drive, keyboard, mouse and monitor. The Amiga is able to trigger programs running on the PC side and so it can appear that the Amiga is running PC software.

Q. What about Apple software on my Amiga?

A. Again, check to see if you only need to access the data rather than run original Apple applications. The Apple can save to MSDOS format disks which the Amiga can read. There is also Amiga software available to let it read Apple-format floppy and hard disk drives.

Q. No, I told you, I must run Apple software.

A. You need an emulator. There are two good ones: ShapeShifter (a shareware program) and Emplant (a commercial product). ShapeShifter is software only, Emplant is a software/hardware combination. The hardware side of Emplant is a Zorro card which offers Apple-standard interfaces such as SCSI and networking (AppleTalk). Recently it was announced that Emplant was also to be released in software-only form for A1200 and maybe other Amiga models. Both emulations require that you have a suitable ROM image, as this has the core Apple operating system software.

Q. Where can I get the ROM image?

A. The ROM image is copyright Apple, so legally you must own the ROM in order to have the image. Normally this means owning an Apple computer and it's a relatively straightforward task to copy the ROM from a real Apple onto floppy for the Amiga to load. Owning an Apple in order to emulate an Apple is a bit daft, so many people buy the ROMs by themselves – the Emplant hardware can make use of them. Buying Apple ROMs by themselves isn't easy. BlitterSoft, distributors of Emplant, should be able to help you track them down. That said, many people obtain the image via electronic networks such as the Internet.

Q. As for Mac games?

A. As the Apple Mac (non-PowerPC based Apples, that is) share the same Motorola processor, Apple emulations run Mac games at about the same speed as genuine Apples. The main bottlenecks are disk access and graphics speed. If you provide the emulation with an entire disk partition this speeds up access and if you use black and white graphics only, or fit a Zorro graphics card, results are as good as real Apples. It also helps if you have at least 8Mb of RAM.

Q. And Mac hardware?

A. The Emplant emulation hardware includes a SCSI interface and AppleTalk adaptors. It's the best way to use Apple hardware. All emulators can also make use of any Amiga SCSI interfaces which means hard drives and CD-ROM drives can be used.

Q. What other computers can I emulate?

A. There are emulators for the ZXSpectrum, Amstrad CPC and Commodore64 available amongst others. Most people use them to play old games. ■

John Kennedy

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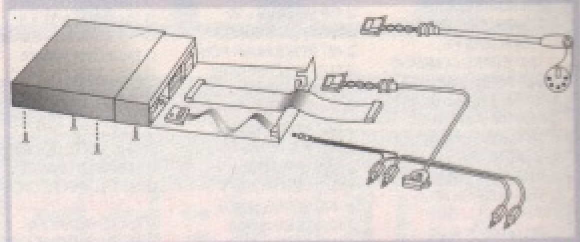


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Logos, meanings and mysteries:

CD ROM – CD32 queries, ParNET and various other CD ROM-related problems.

Expansion – All about upgrading RAM, operating systems and processors.

Accessories – Plug-in hardware of any kind: scanners, disk drives etc.

Programs – Answers to queries on particular pieces of software.

Sound – Music, sampling, MIDI and anything that makes a loud noise.

Utilities – Miscellaneous tools to keep your Amiga running smoothly.

Printers – Form-feeds, page-breaks, preferences and lots, lots more!

Monitors – Monitors, TVs, modulators, screen-modes and all that stuff.

Graphics – Pixels, sprites, animation, pictures. In one small word: graphics.

Business – Spreadsheets, databases, organisers, accounts ...

Comms – Everything you need answering about the internet

Help – Not everything fits into a pigeonhole, but anything you like fits in here.

Q&A

Doctor Horgan and Nurse Bettinson answer your queries on digital movies, web pages and hard drives. Send your technical questions to Q&A, CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



Ah, yes what we have here is a classic case of problema solvous easyus. Let's get the patient to theatre now.



Please carry on doctor, I'm just off to get one of those lovely nurses in the tight uniforms to assist me ...

Digital movies

I have had an Amiga 500 for seven years now. It has 1Mb of RAM plus Workbench 3.1 with a 68000 processor. I'm thinking of buying an Amiga 1200 with a 68030 processor, 16Mb RAM and a CD-ROM. I would like to know what the requirements are to watch the digital movies that Special Reserve are selling. Though I've heard that the Amiga cannot do this. Is this true? If yes, what are you going to do to get them on to the Amiga?

Adam Lowton, Cape Town, South Africa.

You need extra hardware to view digital movies stored on the CD-ROMs. On the CD32 this hardware was provided by the FMV expansion card. However, no one has yet come up with a way of providing this extra hardware capacity for Amiga 1200 CD drives. Several developers are working on it though and hopefully something will come along soon. One such example is HiSoft's forthcoming Squirrel MPEG. As to why we haven't done anything, CU Amiga is a magazine not the manufacturer, although we can – with your help – put pressure on manufacturers (like our campaign to convince VIScorp to produce the Amiga again) but we can do little more.

Better graphics

I am on the verge of buying a PC because of its high quality font and graphic output. I have an Amiga 500, a Canon Bubble Jet printer and a Scanner. However, I am getting fed up with all the little squares that I get when I am printing large pictures. It looks incredibly naff especially when you compare it to what PCs can produce. But before I start looking for a PC, is there any software that can produce output on the Amiga like TrueType fonts on PCs? At the moment I can only use five UNSCALABLE fonts on my printer, please help me!

Kevin Tasker, Cheam.

The problem you have is twofold. Firstly, the graphics files you are printing are suffering from squares because the resolution they are created in isn't high enough. When they are printed at a larger size they have to be stretched, with each dot in the picture covering more space than it was intended to, thus the result is very blocky looking.

The way around this is to work on pictures that have a higher resolution, for which you'll need more complex software, something like Photogenics or ImageFX.

As for the second problem regarding fonts, this isn't the fault of your Amiga but one of age. Modern Amiga's, like modern PCs, support scalable fonts and will print such fonts just as good as any PC can manage. With an updated Amiga and correct software you can even use PC True Type fonts. However, the Amiga 500 was released before scalable fonts were developed and as such it can't handle them, or if it does they're very, very slow, just as a 10 year old PC would be unable to handle them.

If you want scalable fonts or if you want to run the two graphics applications mentioned earlier get an A1200. If you do, you'll probably want to check out Magic Publisher CD-Rom which contains loads of scalable fonts in Postscript and True Type formats (GTI tel: 49 6171 85937) or the WS Fonts CD (Active Software 01325 352260).

Be my slave

As a reader and subscriber for over two years I find your questions and answers section very interesting but having gone back through all my old mags I cannot find an answer to my problem. Please help! I recently upgraded my A1200 with a 40Mb hard drive to a 350Mb hard drive. I would like to know if it is possible to connect my old hard drive so I can download some of the information on it. I am sure I cannot be the only person that would like this information, so I hope you can help.

P. V. Brown Seaford, East Sussex.

Hmmm, I'm sure we've covered this before but the customer is always right so here goes.

Hard drives in the Amiga 1200 are connected using what's known as an IDE interface and this allows two drives to be attached at once. You should find some tiny switches or jumper settings on the drives with instructions on the settings to make them the master and slave drives – a way of telling the units which is the first and second drive to be used by the trusty Amiga.

Now get hold of an IDE cable with two connectors on it (most hardware advertisers in CU Amiga Magazine should be able to help you out). Set your old drive to be the

slave, connect them both up and you'll be able to copy files across to your heart's content. In practice it still may not work, it's very dependant on the types of drives involved and whether you can find the right jumpers and what they need to be changed to.

Late starter

Rather late in life I have acquired my first computer, an Amiga A500+ with a 40Mb hard drive. Its internal workings are a complete mystery to me but generally speaking I find it relatively easy to use. It seems impossible to find anyone to supply information locally and as I have bought a colour printer, I would like to use my Amiga for producing more interesting and professional documents, posters, programs, newsletters etc.

I need up-to-date paint, DTP and word processing programs but without advice I don't know which to buy. Can you help? Brief information on clip art would also be helpful. Like, what is it?!

Sylvia Lintott, Nailsea, North Somerset.

Welcome to the Amiga and don't worry about your age, we all have to start sometime. As for which programs to get, this really depends upon what you want to do and how much you're willing to fork out. However, there are a few good general programs that you can start off with.

For a good word processor with the ability to include pictures in documents take a look at Final Copy II (Softwood Publishing 01773 521606). To create and tamper with pictures check out XiPaint (First Computer 0113 231944).

As for clip art these are collections of ready drawn and painted pictures that you can use in your documents. Keep your eye on our PD Utilities section for regular reviews of clip art disks.

Web pictures

Thanks for producing such a great magazine. Your Wired World HTML tutorials are really good and I've been following them to create my own web pages. However, I'm having problems getting pictures into my web documents. Can you suggest what's going wrong,. I'm using the tag <Img picture.name> but nothing appears when I try the pages out.

Lastly, have you any tips for creating good web pages? Mine don't look anywhere near as good as yours.

Tina Simon, Shepshed.

Ah, a little crawling will get you everywhere. Your image problem is very simple – the HTML tag you are using requires that the so-called attribute 'SRC' sets the path of the picture. An entire example would be something like <IMG SRC="picture.name">.

As for creating good web pages: keep the graphics pictures small in terms of size – no one wants to wait ages while pictures download. Also, clearly identify what is a link and what's an illustration, keep the amount of text reasonable (who wants to read loads of text on a monitor?) and remember to keep the web page to 256 colours visible on a 640x480 resolution – this being the screen size the majority of web users will see your page in.

Finally, some 30 per cent of surfers turn off the graphics viewing capability in their browsers to save download time so use the ALT attribute to tell them what the pictures are.

This and much more is covered in the Wired World tutorials so be sure to stay tuned.

Readers corner

I wanted to answer the Q&A letter from Tim Graver of Suffolk (August '96) about Amiga emulation on a PC. A software emulator has been developed, running Workbench 1.3 called. It is software only and allows for hard disk files, Amiga floppies must be converted to a file which is readable on a PC, Amiga disks are not directly readable by a PC. It ran at a reasonable speed on a Pentium 120. The emulator can be found in comp.sys.amiga.emulations on usenet. As for me I'll keep my Amiga and emulate them both! Also, I have an A-Max web site to put over here. Do you know anyone who would house it?

Reginald Cross, RAF, Lakenheath.

A second letter

In response to Tim Gravers' letter regarding Amiga emulation on the PC you said that this was impossible and that none exist. This is not true. We sell an emulator for this very purpose. It is on a CD called "Emulators Unlimited" which contains many emulators for both the PC and the Amiga including one for the PC that emulates an Amiga. This CD is priced at £18.95 and is a stock item.

First Computer Centre, tel: 0113 231944.

OK, fair and square, we missed this one – hey we can't be perfect! There is indeed an Amiga emulator for PCs available from various news groups or First Computer Centre if you don't have Internet access. It's called UAE, originally standing for Unusable Amiga Emulator (as it was too slow) later changing to Unix Amiga Emulator (it was originally written for Unix computers). As Reginald points out it's not directly compatible with Amiga disks so you'll need to convert software over to PC floppies first. In practice the UAE is too slow to be of much more than a toy even on the 100+ Mhz Pentium PCs.

Next month we should some more details on it if we see how well the Amiga emulates a PC with PC Task 486 and how well a PC emulates an Amiga.

Which upgrade?

I am writing to ask your advice on purchasing a new Amiga. At the moment I own a 1Mb A500 with Workbench 1.3 and I am in dire need to upgrade.

Should I go for a second-hand A1200 and upgrade it with a hard drive, CD-ROM, tower unit and Power PC upgrade board (which phase 5 are said to release), or should I wait until the next generation Amiga is released?

Which one would work out cheaper, and which would be the most powerful (in your opinion)?

I don't want the Amiga to flounder, and for me to end up worse off (in technology terms) so I would like you to point me in the right direction.

Robin Savage, Lincoln.

Until any new Amiga compatibles appear, a second hand (good condition) A1200 is a good option at the moment for the best power and price combination (possibly one that already has a RAM and accelerator upgrade card). You can then take your pick from the many expansion options, of which the towers are generally the best if you want to add a range of extras to the machine.

Monitor mad

I have recently bought a Hyundai CG monitor but I am having terrible difficulties in finding the proper adaptor to connect it to my A1200. The monitor has a male 9-pin connector. PC World in Plymouth wouldn't help as it "Wasn't for a PC". Escom said that only a dedicated Commodore monitor would work with the A1200 and Silica tried to sell me a SCART connector. Can you help?

P. D. Hopwood, Torpoint, Cornwall.

There's nothing better than a quick letter that has a quick answer to bow out on and this is just that.

What you need is a Amiga to VGA monitor cable and the friendly guys at First Computer will be able to sort you one out pretty sharpish, just give them a call on 0113 231944.

Send your Q&A problems to ...

You can send your technical problems [or answers – Ed] to CU Amiga by the following means:

By letter to Q&A, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Email: Q+A@cu Amiga.co.uk.

NO SAES PLEASE We regret that we can't respond to readers' questions by post or over the phone. Please do not include a stamped addressed envelope with your letters as we simply don't have time to answer the thousands we receive. Responses are only available through the pages of this magazine.

Points of view

The Killing Disk



“Some would say it was lucky that my editor disk was damaged ... cynics might even invent a conspiracy theory.”

■ Alan Dykes is CU Amiga Magazine's Editor and enjoys a good game from time to time.

By Alan Dykes

I really like Team 17, the company has been good for the Amiga, there are a lot of people of integrity and talent working there and they're not scared of some light refreshment in The Commercial (the pub up the road) after a game or 12 of Worms. Most of all though, they've produced some top quality Amiga software which most of you, and certainly I have enjoyed. So it was all the more disappointing to find out that at their proudest moment, when they had finally finished the most advanced game of its kind on Amiga, they messed up big time.

As some of you will already have found out there was a problem with the editor disk for The Killing Grounds. Game spotters may have found it a little odd that I didn't mention the editor in my review last month, after all it is packaged and sold with the game. But the boxed, final copy sent to me had a damaged editor disk: the slider was bent and the disk was unreadable. So I wrote the review without mention of it, intending to rectify the situation in a separate review this month.

However, when I asked for another disk I was told that it would be difficult, because, well, it didn't work. This was confirmed when, in the following days, a multitude of phone calls came in and the IRCs began buzzing with news that people who had bought the game could not get the editor to even load. Some might say it was lucky for Team 17 that my editor disk was damaged – if I had found out while reviewing the game that the final, shop bound version of the software was useless, I would have weighed that into the score. Cynics might even invent a conspiracy theory. Let me assure you that the score could only have gone up rather than down. The marks I gave TKG were based on the game alone: it's still worth the money by itself. The editor is a frill (albeit an allegedly useful frill) which could indefinitely extend the product's life. But hey, how would I know, I haven't seen it.

That's not the point though. Having decided to put the disk in the box they should have managed to get it working before it went on sale. I'm not sure who's responsible for QC on master disks but they must have been on the beer in The Commercial when they should have been doing their job for this to happen. Team 17's reputation as a supplier of quality software has taken a dent.

I believe Martyn Brown blew his top when he heard about this, and rightly so. There will be a patch to fix the problem available from Team 17 soon, but it's going to take perfect production of Andy Davidson's Worms AGA to fully restore faith.■

Up in smoke



■ Tony Horgan is CU Amiga Magazine's Technical Editor.

By Tony Horgan

I took a phone call at the office some time ago from someone who wanted to get set up for World Wide Web access from his Amiga. Fine, I thought, and directed the caller to our July '96 issue which came with a book all about the subject, some starter software and an offer of a free trial period from an Internet service provider – problem solved, it would seem, and all for the price of a back issue. Wrong. You see the asking price of £5.99 (including p+p) was apparently too high for such a package, even though it was a complete solution to the caller's needs. Perhaps the caller was on low income or otherwise financially under-endowed? Not likely, as it was dropped into the conversation that a Playstation and a Sega Saturn had been recent purchases.

“If the 'cheap' mentality of some users infiltrates the Amiga scene much more it could all go up in smoke ...”

Another complaint came from a reader being 'conned' by September's cover mounted CD-ROM. Not content with 540Mb of quality software, including a fully functioning critically acclaimed commercial graphics package (Vista Lite 3.0), they claimed that the two audio tracks on the CD were fillers. The first is a combined showcase and contest prize for the best music module sent in from the readership (Tune of the Month on a CD), while the second is an exclusive demonstration of the lead review product from that issue, the entirely innovative OctaMED SoundStudio. Why do people react like this? I'm sorry but nothing is absolutely free and we have got to try to keep everybody happy – there were many who loved the audio tracks and putting them on was certainly more innovative than what we could have put on. How much money would you normally pay for an Amiga CD? How much money would you normally pay for a book on internet access? Some people should recognise good value when they see it.

Fortunately there are plenty of Amiga users willing to put their money where their mouth is – and they don't have to spend much after all. Without them the Amiga market would not have survived the last two years, and I am very grateful for that.

But if the 'cheap' mentality of some users infiltrates the Amiga scene much more it could all go up in smoke faster than you think.■

The changing face of Amiga

By Alan Bunker

Inevitably, my recent articles on the Amiga scene throughout Europe provoked a large response. While some praised the work, comments and opinions, others were somewhat upset at the apparent findings, even critical of the lack of full-blown investigative work saying, therefore, that any comments were not particularly fair or reflective of the bigger picture.

Firstly, let me lay to rest the latter opinion. Unfortunately, although I would be quite happy to write the whole magazine for Mr Dykes and in turn send my Bank Manager into early retirement, I was only allocated a small proportion of CU Amiga in which to explore the breadth of the European continent. And rightly so for CU has a lot more to offer than just one article.

However, this in itself is limiting so I took the decision to chat to one or two informed Amiga users in each of the major territories (mainly competent Amiga journalists) for a detailed, honest opinion. Whether or not you liked what they said is really not my problem but I think they would know their own market much better than most, don't you?

The face of the Amiga is rapidly changing – games development is almost at a standstill in complete contrast to five years ago. On the other hand, the strength of the machine as far as serious applications go remains solid. I had the pleasure of working for two years at Team17 Software, leaving in November 1995. And I can tell you that even though Team 17 are winding down Amiga software development, they still use Amiga hardware and software to produce fantastic rendered FMV sequences for use in their PC and next-gen console titles. Of course, they are not alone in this.

The point being that the Amiga was once the only decent games machine. But while we were busy playing the likes of Kick Off, Project-X and Syndicate, there were three things happening which would reshape the face of home entertainment:

One - the mighty US of A was busy installing PCs into every home and workplace.

> **"[The Amiga's] place in the world is now that of a high spec, specialist computer suitable for serious applications."**

Two - the mighty Japanese were developing cheap but powerful 16-bit and 32-bit games consoles.

Three – the not so mighty Commodore collapsed and Amiga development died.

As a result, you have to accept two things: One – the Amiga has a much diminished place as a games machine. Two – its place in the world is now that of a high spec, specialist computer suitable for serious applications and the more serious end of the market. The face of the Amiga has changed but not necessarily for the worst. So deal with it, and get the most out of it. This was the underlying message in the Euro articles but, as usual, a number of people have latched onto the negative comments and connotations because doom and gloom is much more easier to maintain than happiness and optimism. ■

■ **Alan Bunker is a freelance journalist and erstwhile PR manager of Team 17 Software.**

To be A1200 or not to be ...



by Lisa Collins

Tomer Homer's points of view in September's issue has whipped up a storm of protest from some software companies. This month in the course of researching a new series on where to get Amiga software, a variety of software companies had a few things to say about Tom's declaration that "If software houses continue to write games for the A500 we will get nowhere and stay there." Some of the responses to this were not printable but the gist of the argument ran that companies such as Alternative and Guildhall Leisure cannot afford to stop producing all Amiga games and move onto AGA only versions because the A500 versions of their games far outsell AGA only versions. It's a catch 22 situation for companies who are experiencing this. Do they reduce the quality of their games drastically so that they run on all Amigas or indeed do they avoid games at all that won't run on all Amigas altogether?

Getting games to run on all Amigas with 1Mb is a difficult process and the more advanced the game the less likely it will appear at all if it has to run on all Amigas. Alternative's Pro Rugby game looks great so far on the PC but it may never make it to the Amiga if it cannot be ported across to run on all Amigas without losing the essence of the game. They feel it just isn't commercially viable to produce an AGA only version which it could be easily ported across to. Alternative are not making this decision on a whim, they've looked at sales figures and have seen that when they produced a game, Tracksuit Manager, for example the A500 version of the game has far outsold the A1200 version. Guildhall Leisure have also experienced the same phenomena.

The explanation for all Amiga games outselling A1200 only versions is a bit of a mystery given that the majority of active Amiga owners now own an A1200. There are a few plausible explanations though. It could well be that A1200 owners buy the all Amiga version rather than wait on the AGA version to be released later, which is normally the case.

Or it could be that some new owners are a bit unsure about the capabilities of their new A1200 and err on the side of caution by choosing

> **"Some new owners may be a bit unsure about the capabilities of their new Amiga and err on the side of caution."**

an all Amigas version of a game which they know will definitely work on their machine. It could also be that some companies such as Alternative and Guildhall could be selling to an area that is dominated by A500 owners.

Whatever the reason, let's hope that this will not become a trend amongst all software houses. There are lots of sales to be had from producing a top quality game that utilises the full capabilities of the A1200.

Heaven help us if the makers of games such as Breed 3D decided not to produce their game because it wouldn't run on all Amigas. Where would be then? ■

■ **Lisa Collins, is CU Amiga Magazine's Deputy Editor.**

Backchat

Not to be left out, Spain puts their side of the Amiga story forward, Robert Wilson's letter causes a bulge in the response mailbag and our Save the Amiga campaign impresses the populous. Send your views to backchat now.

Here, here

I read the letter of the month in the July issue, from Barrie Pennington and for the most part I have to agree with him. Cover mounted software does keep the Amiga scene alive, it also encourages Amiga users to be creative and that can only be a good thing. Most of the software I have for my Amiga, are cover mounted disks from various Amiga magazines and if these software packages didn't appear on your cover disks, then I guess I would have left my Amiga long ago and bought a PC. Being in a part time, low income job, I can't afford to buy most of the serious software available and so cover mounting various software applications that can equal the best that PC software has to offer is a godsend.

Cover mounting games is also a brilliant idea and I applaud Mr Pennington on his wise comments. Maybe CU Amiga can cover mount the older classic software from years ago, like Chase HQ, Arkanoid, Captain Blood and Crazy Cars. I can't see how releasing these games on your disk at his time could possibly hurt the Amiga software industry.

Your Euroscene feature was excellent. It made me realise how big the Amiga user/fan base is and what a huge amount of people still remain loyal to the Amiga – even after the onslaught of PC and console advertising and hype. It makes me feel proud to be an Amiga user. I hope VIScorp get their act together and that we get new Amigas soon. I also hope that they don't do an Escom on us and leave us high and dry or dump us on the computer scrap heap. The Amiga deserves a second chance and I know it can be a world leader in the home computer market. Long live the Amiga.

Christopher Neil Hindley, Flintshire.

Letter of the Month
All pulling together

In this age of uncertainty isn't it nice to see companies who care about the Amiga banding together to bring us the best in gaming experience? I refer, of course, to the deals offered by Phase 5, Team 17/Ocean and Gordon Harwoods Computers. Using the superb Alien Breed 3DII – The Killing Grounds as bait, these companies must have done more for Amiga sales than anybody in recent years. Coming at a time when SIMMs prices are at an all time low and still falling, the Harwoods Blizzard deals are the ideal incentive to upgrade.

As everyone will be aware, we have had a long anxious wait for the aforementioned game, but earlier this week those awfully nice chaps at Gordon Harwoods ended my anxiety – AB3DII-TKG was a reality. Well, was it worth the wait? The game looks superb (anybody who saw the CU cover disks 133 and 135 already knew this). The gameplay is excellent, the levels are genuinely challenging and seem impossible on the first attempt. They are still tricky when you know every nook and cranny of the level. Whoever play tested these levels must have been pretty good. The eerie lighting effects and the music complement the game perfectly to give one of the most terrifying experiences to be had on a computer (not including DIY repairs). Do not attempt to play this game if you have a heart condition, there are plenty of moments that will scare the willies out of you.

I, probably like everyone else who has the game, would like to start designing my own levels as soon as possible and with the least amount of fuss. How about running a series of tutorials to show us how it's done? The on-line documentation, although seemingly thorough, is a bit hard to follow whereas your tutorials are generally easy to follow and straight to the point and are one of the major reasons I buy CU Amiga Magazine.



Paul Buxton, Derby.

Taking action

For over 12 months I have been wondering if I should upgrade my standard Amiga A1200. Arguments against upgrading; the Amiga market in very shaky position, price, support/backup, software. Arguments for upgrading: familiarity with the Amiga, VIScorp could be the light at the end of the tunnel, loads of PD software and some new games appearing.

In the end I decided to stick with the Amiga after I looked at some PCs. I rang PC Power Computing and bought myself a Viper 50 with 8Mb and while I was on the phone I ordered a quad speed CD-ROM. So, for those out there like me, don't hesitate any longer – go ahead The improvement in my system is phenomenal and the amount of software available to me is never ending. While you sit there and think, the Amiga could sink.

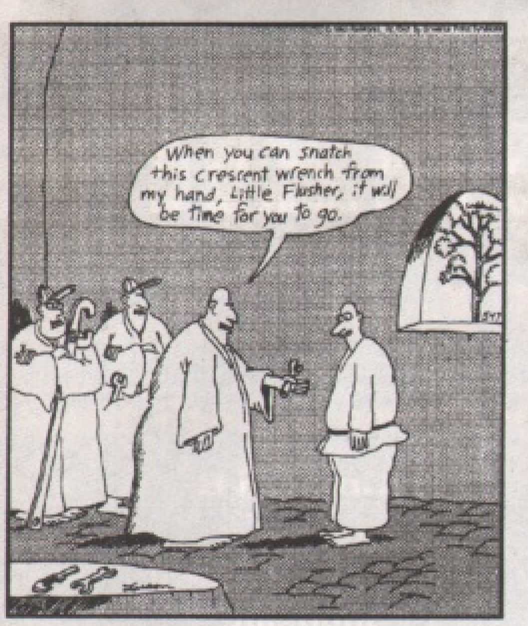
Graham Wood, Northwich.

Well done Graham, let's hope your inspiration to anyone out there who is thinking about upgrading.

Never been better

I've been an Amiga fan now for about six years. I'm proud of my set up and will remain loyal to the computer that has enabled me to be so creative and has given me so much entertainment and pleasure throughout the years. I witnessed the sad demise of Commodore and I was fairly disappointed with Escom. However, I was delighted with the news of VIScorp taking control of the Amiga, at long last a company with a vision for the future of the Amiga. VIScorp have many ex Commodore engineers working for them who are well aware of the Amiga's present

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



The Shaolin School of Plumbing

and future capabilities and they will be committed to making the Amiga the ultimate in home entertainment. VIScorp's press conferences have been open and positive – my own confidence in the future of the Amiga has never been greater.

It doesn't take too much imagination to realise the potential of the set top box Amiga. Full world wide web service, multi-player net games, downloading of movies and games, video phoning and much more.

From the start VIScorp have shown a great interest in talking to second party developers of the Amiga exploring the possibilities of incorporating RISC processors or even the power PC chip. We Amigans can now look forward to a bright future with VIScorp which I believe will pave the way for a new era of home computing with the Amiga at the forefront where it belongs.

Nigel Brook, Berkshire.

For the cause

I would like to congratulate your magazine on being the first to actually do something about the situation with the Amiga rather than just complain about it like other magazines. I bought the August issue primarily for the letter to VIScorp. I would like you to see what I wrote for further comments ...

Escom's plans for the Amiga were to replace the old custom chips with an off-the-shelf graphics board. While this would have some benefits may I say that following this route would take away the Amiga's ability to be so good at video, not to mention its excellent bitplane capabilities which incidentally now appear to be able to handle "Doom' clones very effectively.

Notice how I did not complain that it would not be an Amiga any more, unlike many others. A computer is defined by how it works, not how many colours it can show at once, so as long as it has Workbench I'm happy.

However, it would be a shame to lose the custom hardware which, at least, from a programmer's point of view makes it such a joy to use. If anyone feels like telling me that the Amiga cannot do Doom Clones all that effectively, then may I remind them that a PC requires a 486, stacks of RAM, a hard drive and a graphics board to do a 1x1 pixel, smoothly running game. To do the same on the Amiga needs only a few megs of RAM. This is due to the custom chips so let's not lose them eh?

Adam Shailer, Kent.

Spain steps in

I am a bit annoyed with your magazine. I read the Euroscene feature in August '96 where at the end of the article you said that the reason Spain didn't appear was that the author couldn't understand anyone that you spoke to. Spain is not the poor country that you have in mind. We are not lazy or stupid. Spanish people are Europeans like all the others covered in the article and we have our right to say as well as the others covered in the article. So we have to be respected in the same way as France, Germany, Italy, Slovakia'or Poland.

Anyway I don't want any apologies I just want to provide the information that you didn't get. Originally, in Spain, the Amiga didn't make a great impact but the benefits were enough to keep the Amiga going and in the space of two years it became the number one games and graphics machine. From 1992, however, the PC became the more attractive option and the Amiga lost the battle. The demise of Commodore killed off the old Amiga in Spain with PD and demoscene software remaining as the only areas.

After the Commodore takeover, the Amiga Technologies' official distributor was PIXELmedia but due the problems with VIScorp and Escom, the distributor changed (now AmigaTEK).

Amiga INFO is not the only magazine in Spain covering Amigas as other magazines such as SuperJuegos, dedicate two-four pages a month to the Amiga.

The Amiga never sold well here but there is a good Amiga community (Amiga clubs, Demoscene festivals, BBSes etc) and the A1200 has become the most important Amiga in the country.

I think PowerAmigas are the way forward. If they were to be released here they would be a success. The PC is popular here but thanks to the superior Amiga OS, the PC could be dramatically erased from the Spanish computer market – the only advantages the PC has over the Amiga are its price and processor and the PowerAmigas will be made to beat the PC exactly in these two areas.

Finally, Amiga does not exactly mean girlfriend in Spanish. Yes the word means friend but a female friend. (amiga for women, amigos for men). Novia translates as girlfriend in Spanish.

Francisco Rincón, Mallorca, Spain.

Thanks for that information about the situation in Spain and apologies to any Spanish people who may have been offended by the article.

The debate rages on

Robert Wilson's letter (August 96) sparked a flood of response from our readers. Here are some of the letters that we received.

Re: Robert Wilson's letter (August 96) where he complains that the tutorials are too easy. I recently purchased an Amiga 500 plus for my daughters (four and six) and myself. I was annoyed at the arrogant tone of his letter. Surely he can understand that your magazine caters for the needs of all age groups and differing abilities and not just the super intelligent university hackers.

My eight year old daughter and I both read your magazine because you have aimed the contents at all ages/abilities she can understand and follow the articles as well as, if not better, than myself. Please do not change your formula too dramatically so as to alienate a very large element of your readership ie ordinary families who want nothing more than an informative, accurate and enjoyable read, in a nutshell CU Amiga Magazine.

Mr PC Hart, Chesire.

I bought an A1200 just two years ago and, as I had no experience of computing, I was grateful to discover CU Amiga Magazine. At first a lot of what was written went over my head but there was always the something to get me going – especially the easy guide to using/unpacking cover discs. Gradually things became clearer and I was able to refer back to previous magazines for more advanced learning ie the Paint tutorials at the end of 1994. Being interested in video making I am most appreciative of cover disks such as Adorage and Videotracker, along with the help on how to use them. The CD-ROMs have also been marvellous.

Please don't listen to eggheads like Robert Wilson – maybe he doesn't need your help at all but lots do. For example, whilst I no longer need help unpacking disks, it is good that you include advice for others that do. Eggheads can always skip that bit.

Roy Trahar, Herts.

I feel that the points made by Robert Wilson are valid. I have several friends who own various types of Amiga and are at various stages of the learning curve, none however could be considered beginners. We tend to learn and receive help from each other. To own an Amiga is to become part of the network of Amiga enthusiasts. When people care this much, they are only too happy to help.

Sam Lambert, London.

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There is a limit on the amount of games available in this offer. If your first and second choices are not in stock we will contact you with some alternatives.



Budokan

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- Every month CU Amiga Magazine brings you the latest news on the Amiga scene with exclusive interviews and well informed comment.
- Our renowned tutorials section shows you how to make the most of the Amiga's most popular software packages
- Our reviewers are the best in the business and whether you're interested in technical products and software or games, you can be sure of our authority.
- The best EXCLUSIVE cover disks and CDs. Every month we publish cover disks packed with full utilities, demos and the latest games ... look no further.

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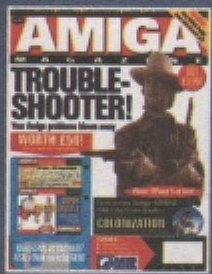
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Back Issues

Got that sinking feeling? You arrived at the shop but there were no CUs left? Again. Sort it out right here ...

August 1995



ON THE DISKS: Clarissa 2.0 and demo of Cammy Vs Honda in SSF II. **FEATURE:** Trouble shooting on your Amiga **INSIDE:** DPaint 5 review, the new A400/060 with CyberVision graphics, Games: Colonization, Sensible Golf, Time Keepers, PM2.

September 1995



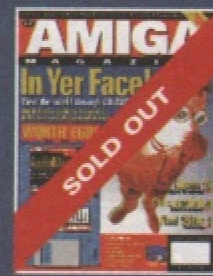
ON THE DISKS: OctaMED 5.04, Speris Legacy, Time Keepers. **FEATURE:** Sex and computers: an indepth look at what there is and what people think about it. **INSIDE:** Alien Breed 3D , Gloom, SSFII, Brutal, ViroCop A500, Base Jumpers CD32.

October 1995



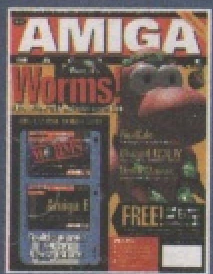
ON THE DISKS: Pagestream 2.2, Fears and Citadel demo. **FEATURES:** Using your PageStream cover disk for DTP, Storage: HDs floppies and CD-ROMs. **INSIDE:** Odyssey, Real 3D v3, PageStream 3.0i and a multimedia station reviewed.

November 1995



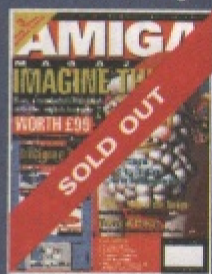
ON THE DISKS: AudioMaster IV full program, Virtual Karting demo, CD-ROM edition-Aminet 7 and more. **FEATURES:** CD-ROM definitive guide to drives and disks. **INSIDE:** Cinema 4D, Mac™ Emulation, Final Writer 4, Pinball Mania.

December 1995



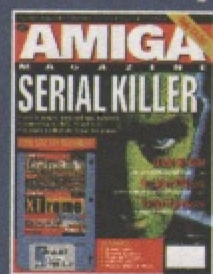
ON THE DISKS: Worms demo, Amiga E full program plus free Amiga E manual **FEATURES:** Programming, Amiga music. **INSIDE:** Leading Lap, Worms, Flight of the Amazon Queen, Coala, FinalCalc and Amiga M1438S Monitor.

January 1996



ON THE DISKS: Imagine 3.0 full program, Zeewolf 2 & Algomusic **FEATURES:** 3D rendering using our cover disk. **INSIDE:** MiconiK Tower, World Construction Set, Amilink, Zeewolf 2, SWOS 95/96, Super Tennis Champions and much more.

February 1996



ON THE DISKS: TextureStudio plus Imagine objects, DVerb, Mandel 92, Bluff Titler, Amiga E source code, Xtreme Racing. **FEATURES:** Serial linking, portable Amiga prototypes and the first Net Wedding. **INSIDE:** DiskMagic, HiSoft CD-ROM, Virtual i glasses.

March 1996



ON THE DISKS: VideoStage Pro, Imgauge & XFD, Gloom Deluxe and 10 Worms levels. **FEATURES:** VideoStage and The future of Games. **INSIDE:** 060 for A1200, Wordworth 5, Blitz Basic, Super Street Fighter II Turbo, Super Skidmarks data disk.

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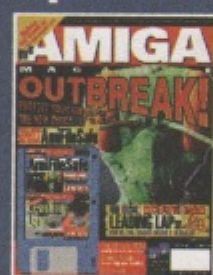
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April 1996



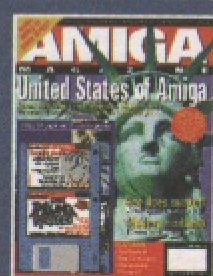
ON THE DISKS: AmiFileSafe, Leading Lap SE – 5 level full game. CD-ROM edition available. **FEATURES:** Virus Protection and Wallace & Gromit in the right computer. **INSIDE:** SX 32, HiQ Station, The Chaos engine previewed, Zeewolf 2 tips, and more...

May 1996



ON THE DISKS: Soundtracker Pro II, MIDI Sequencer demo, Alien Breed 3D2 demo. **FEATURES:** Free Amiga music book, the new Walker, Amiga Surfer pack, and the quest for Amigas. **INSIDE:** LightWave 4, Slamtilt Pinball, Tracksuit Manager 2 reviewed.

June 1996



ON THE DISKS: Termite demo, Killing Grounds demo. Plus free 96 page net and comms guide. **FEATURES:** Escom sells Amiga Technologies, publish your music. **INSIDE:** Modem round-up, Total Football and new TimeKeepers disk reviewed.

July 1996



ON THE DISKS: XiPaint (full program) and Primal Rage demo. **FEATURES:** Special report on what's happening in Europe and the latest on Visorp and PIOS. **INSIDE:** Image FX 2.6, Surf Squirrel, A4000 Tower, Primal Rage, SWOS Euro and more reviewed.

August 1996



ON THE DISKS: EasyCalc (full program) and Valhalla III demo. **FEATURES:** The future of the Amiga with VIScorp, the new PIOS machine and the second part of the Euroscene feature. **INSIDE:** Siamese Twin, Photogenics 2.0, Valhalla III and Tin Toy reviewed.

September 1996



ON THE DISKS: Vista Lite (full program) and a demo of Brian Lara Cricket '96. CD-ROM edition too. **FEATURES:** The Aminet exposed. All 6 gigabytes! **INSIDE:** Final Writer 5, OctaMED SoundStudio, Atapi CD-ROM drive. Plus an exclusive preview of the new AGA Worms.



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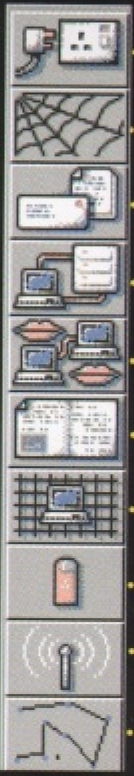
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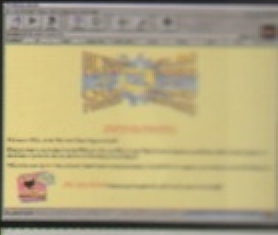
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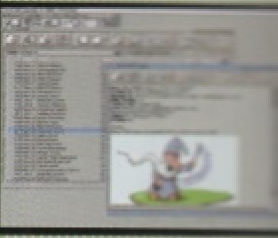
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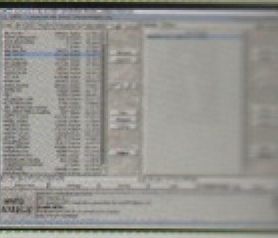
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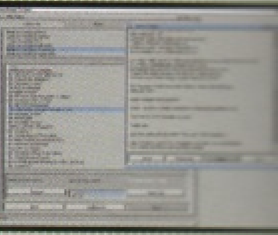
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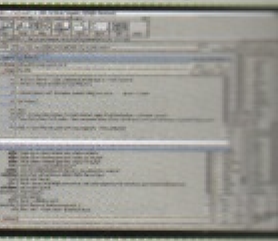
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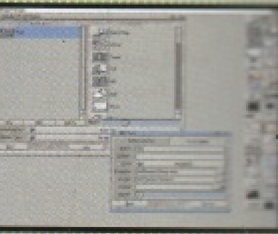
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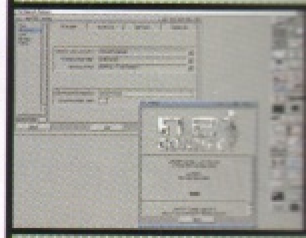
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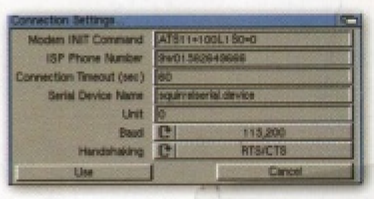
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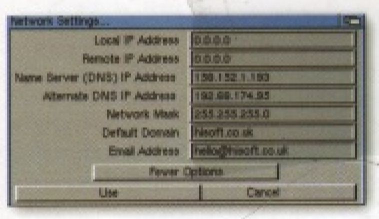
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